

FREE WILL AND  
HUMAN  
RESPONSIBILITY

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H · H · HORNE

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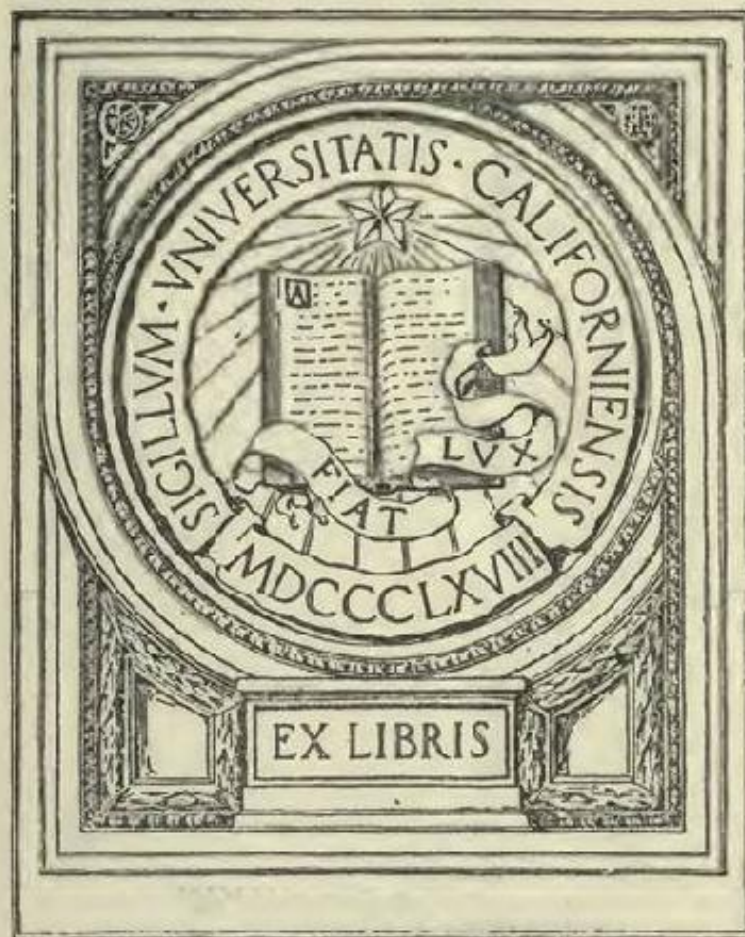
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# **FREE WILL AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY**

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FREE WILL AND  
HUMAN  
RESPONSIBILITY

A Philosophical Argument

BY

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**IN HONOR OF  
"THE DARTMOUTH SPIRIT"  
IN  
PHILOSOPHY,  
FREE, INQUIRING, AND PRAGMATIC  
IN  
LIFE,  
LOYAL, EFFICIENT, AND PRACTICAL**



## PREFACE

THE following monograph grew out of class exercises in my course in philosophy given for a number of years in Dartmouth College. In order to quicken interest by varying the method and to make philosophy touch life, we would sometimes have classroom debates on philosophical subjects by the students under the guidance of the instructor. The main issues in philosophy, because of their two-sided nature, of the uncertainty of their settlement, and of their stimulating effect on both the imagination and the intellect, lend themselves easily to the method of debate, as Plato, the Scholastics, and Bishop Berkeley illustrate.

Now the question as to whether the fate of man rests at all with himself or not, which is the problem this little volume discusses, is one of perennial freshness and interest, to which the newest movements of thought always contribute additional data without thereby finally solving the issue. If any suppose the question is worn out, let him recall the notable newly translated work of the leading French pragmatist, Bergson, on *Time and Free Will*. Each new generation of thinkers comes upon this problem afresh, and to it a class in philosophy will always respond. In my own work I have felt the need of a clear brief treatise covering both sides of the issue in outline, to which students might be referred, and which might perhaps be used as a text for discussion at a certain point in the course. These pages are designed to supply such a need.

It is the business of a college teacher of philosophy, as I conceive it, not to think for his pupils, as the lecture method commonly allows, but to guide his pupils into thinking for themselves. The teacher of philosophy is there not to tell his pupils what to think but to show them how to think. Philosophy cannot be learned, it must be thought; the problems in philosophy appeal not to the memory but to the reason. Even the history of philosophy, if it would be vitally taught, must be followed, not objectively as so many finished data, but subjectively as a voyage of discovery of the thinking intelligence of this present class. Informality and

independence are requisite in class discussions. My old pupils will remember that we dedicated our philosophical classroom ("Dartmouth M") to "freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and the search for the ultimate truth".

These ends on the whole are best met if the instructor keep his own conclusions in the background until he has brought out the individual views of the members of his class. In this way the power of dominating suggestion in thought is somewhat canceled.

But after the class has done its best, it is entitled to know where the instructor stands and why he stands there. It is very important that the instructor make it plain that the students who disagree with his conclusions have not lost his favor. In a philosophical classroom unity of opinion on the essential issues is not a necessity but a calamity. Now the following pages represent *in extenso* the summing up of the argument in one of our debates on the part of the instructor, including his personal equation.

The content of the argument may be seen by a glance at the chapter headings. First, a survey of the "Analogous Issues" indicates the problem is not an isolated one; next, the brief "Historical Sketch of the Issue" gives perspective to the discussion; then "The Issue" is formulated in its intensive significance; in joining the debate the question is so stated that it falls to determinism to present the affirmative side in "The Arguments for Determinism"; next appears the "Rebuttal of these Arguments"; after which come "The Arguments for Free Will", this order in the argument being in accord with the racial development of free institutions from East to West. Because the latest philosophical movement bases its conclusions on feelings and activities rather than ideas, it is omitted from the main body of the argument, though its importance is recognized in an independent chapter on "Pragmatism and Freedom". Finally, having reached our conclusion on the basis of reason primarily, unless we deceive ourselves, in the final chapter on "The Difference It Makes" the application of the conclusion is made. In this way pragmatism is used to support a conclusion already

grounded on reason though it was not used to reach that conclusion. It is recognized that such support to a previous conclusion is weakened by the consideration that, had the conclusion been the contradictory, pragmatism could have been invoked just the same. Feelings and activities are individual, reason is universal.

Readers of my *Idealism in Education* will recall that the discussion of freedom of the will was there omitted as being too long a digression to have a place in the argument, though it is obvious that, if will is really one of the elements of man-making, as there claimed, it must be a free will. I am glad by this publication to fill the gap in that argument.

During the past winter my notes on these pages have been used with advantage to me in my New York University class studying "The Philosophy of Life", where iron has sharpened iron.

When this volume falls into the hands of any old student of mine to whom its contents are familiar, I trust he will receive it, despite lapsed time and intervening space, as a personal greeting and a not unwelcome reminder of old associations. Especially may it be allowed me by sons of the old Mother that a decade of happy service in, to borrow Whittier's phrase, "classic Dartmouth's college halls" sufficiently entitles me to seek to honor by this modest publication on a noble theme the continuing and ever-living "Dartmouth Spirit".

H. H. H.

LEONIA, NEW JERSEY,

August 5, 1911.

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## **CHAPTER 1: ANALOGOUS ISSUES**

MAN begins his career in the world with the sense of dependence, and gradually wins for himself a sense of independence. So it was with the race; so it is with the child. This sense of dependence is founded in fact—the race is dependent on nature, and the child is dependent on the parents. With the growth of mental power comes man's sense of his dependence, his recognition of the fact of his greater environment, and inevitable and obstinate questionings. With this sense of dependence, said Schleiermacher, religion is born. And, we may add, with these first questionings philosophy begins.

In those early communings of the soul with itself, which Plato considered to be the essence of philosophy, it no sooner raised the question of its own dependence than, finding itself encompassed with so many and such overpowering influences, it gave the question an affirmative answer. This was natural. And to assert dependence of the human soul has remained customary. It is the deterministic view of life.

With the increase, however, in "the value and dignity of human life" as civilization advanced from man's original dependence upon his natural environment to his partial dependence upon himself, this affirmative answer is itself questioned, and a few bold thinkers and many practical individuals in the Western hemisphere venture to deny the doctrine of determinism and to act as though they were free. Thus in outline has arisen one of the main past and present issues in the domain of philosophy, viz., the problem of determinism vs. freedom. It is a problem that cuts a wide swath in human thinking, it is one upon which each new generation of thinkers and actors comes afresh for itself, it is one upon which every decade of advancing knowledge throws a reflected light, and it is one that has many analogies in other departments of human research.

To assist us in orienting ourselves in the field of this philosophical problem, let us recall at the outset some of the related and analogous problems from other fields. Some of

these analogies we shall find recurring later in the body of the discussion as positive or negative arguments. To recall these associations now will widen our perspective and increase our sense of familiarity as we come later to the central question.

The physicist in studying the motions of bodies is led to distinguish between movements that are obstructed or hindered and those that are free. When one billiard ball strikes another, its motion is hindered; the planets swing freely in their orbits. The movements of the limbs of the body clothed in tight garments are restricted; otherwise, free. The body falling through the air is somewhat hindered in its motion, while the body falling in a vacuum is free. In both cases the movement of the body is commonly held to be determined by the antecedent conditions and the surrounding circumstances. Is human action likewise so determined? Human action is certainly hindered by external circumstances and it is also certainly influenced, to a degree at least, by the antecedent conditions. But is this the whole story of man's conduct?

The biologist in his study of organic forms has framed the doctrine of "determination" for his own field. In this field we meet with the phrases "determinate variations" and even "determinate evolution". "Determinate variations", like the color of the eyes or hair, are congenital, that is, they come by heredity, and are due to some specific inherent cause which shapes them in definite directions; they are contrasted with indeterminate variations, which are indefinite or even fortuitous in character, like some malformation from an injury. "Determinate evolution" is that directed by some preceding physical cause which shapes its course; if the cause is internal, the determination is said to be "intrinsic"; if external, environmental, the determination is said to be "extrinsic". The biologists themselves are not agreed as to whether variations are determinate or not but, if we except the defenders of "organic selection", they are fairly agreed that evolution is due to determination in some sense, that is, the mental factor may be discarded as a cause in explaining evolution. On the other hand, the defenders of "organic selection", who believe that



evolution is a psychophysical process, utilize the mind of the creature in explaining evolution. Shall we say, analogously, that human action is due wholly to physical causes, internal or external, or both? or that mind is a cause in explaining human conduct?

The students of politics, society, and human government likewise have a set of distinctions similar to those of determinism and freedom in philosophy. In early forms of society we have the slave class and the freemen. In government we have colonial dependencies and the independent mother country; in winning its freedom from the mother country the colony itself becomes independent. In government likewise we have despotisms which determine the life of the people from above and constitutional monarchies which allow the people, to some degree at least, to determine themselves. Students of social phenomena distinguish also between the conflicting elements of the system and the individual; the system would subject individuality, and the individual would destroy the system. By analogy, is the action of man to be construed altogether as determined by the system of which he is a part, or partly by himself?

In economics we have again similar matters. Protection is the rule; free trade, allowing no tax on commerce or on one commodity at the expense of another, is the exception. Shall labor be restricted or free? Shall the shop be "closed" or "open"? Shall the standard of value be one or two, gold or "free silver"?

In logic we likewise meet with a process of "determination." The number of men is greater than the number of yellow men, and the number of yellow men is greater than the number of tall yellow men. This process of restricting the generality of a term by marks of individuality is known as "determination". As determination or intension increases, the extension decreases. The lowest limit of determination is called the *infima species* and the highest limit of non-determination is called the *summum genus*. Such a *summum genus* is the "substance" in Spinoza's doctrine. Where does human action belong in this

scale of determination?

In psychology likewise we meet with the phrase "mental determination". It has both a racial and an individual signification. The doctrine of mental determination in the race is like that of "determinate evolution" considered above; it holds that the evolution of mind is determined by the preceding stages through which the process has passed, that the mind does not itself influence through its choices the direction its future development is to take. The doctrine of mental determination in the individual holds that all the elements in consciousness at any time cooperate toward an end-state which we call choice or decision. The choice is wholly determined by its antecedent mental conditions. This view is the result of the application to psychology of the scientific law that effects are determined by preceding causes. It is evident that this doctrine of individual mental determination is no longer analogous to but is already a part of the philosophical problem of determinism vs. freedom. As such it must later receive most careful treatment.

Finally, in theology we meet with many problems akin to this one in philosophy. In fact, "theology" is another name for that part of philosophy which treats of things divine. Religion is man's sense of relationship to God. The theologies that emphasize God in this relation are deterministic, those that emphasize man are indeterministic. In the Orient the theologies of Pantheism and Mohammedanism, and in the West of Augustinianism, Thomism, and Calvinism are deterministic in the various forms of their doctrines of predestination. To defend the freedom of the human will is to be heretical; as illustrated in the doctrines of Pelagianism, Scotism, and Arminianism. These views represent the protest in the interest of man of the Celtic and Teutonic spirit against the orthodox deterministic theology. Further, the very distinction in theology between orthodoxy and "free-thinking" illustrates our problem; orthodoxy is generally not simply some form of determinism, it is also itself a deterministic influence in the lives of the young in any communion; while free-thinking is not simply heretical,

it also breeds the questioning attitude.

Many other analogies could be drawn between similar problems in other departments of thought and our own problem. A few of these may be indicated without being worked out. An element constituting a member of a compound described by chemistry is determined in action by the other members of the compound as well as by its own nature and behaves differently from a "free", *i. e.* uncombined element. In society some of its members are hemmed in by environing prison walls, while others walk at liberty. All members of society again are required by law to support the work of the state by taxation, while some members in addition make free gifts to the state. The institution of marriage determines the bounds of expression of the sex life, while the theory of "free love" removes such bounds. In church history an "established church" receives state patronage and is subject to a degree to state control, while a "free church" is independent of both state patronage and control.

By a review of these analogous problems it is not intended to prejudge our question in advance, nor even to suggest that an individual thinker to be consistent with himself must adopt the corresponding side in each case. Thus one might find himself a believer in free trade for economic reasons and in determinism for philosophical reasons, without feeling bound to revise either one view or the other in the interest of consistency. These analogies prove nothing, they suggest much.

We approach nearer the argument when we ask what the unfolding opinion of mankind on this problem has been, especially if one's philosophy of history leads him to believe that as thought advances in time so our knowledge of the truth increases. To such a review of historic opinion we now turn.

## CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE ISSUE

IN this historical review let us begin as near the beginning as we can, that is, with the primitive peoples. These are they who represent the stage of savagery in social evolution. At one time this stage alone existed on the face of the earth; it still exists among the backward peoples of the world. By primitive peoples we thus mean two things, *viz.*, the earliest peoples and those still existent who, through retarded development, approximate the worldview and attainments of those earliest peoples.

Among primitive peoples in this twofold sense the question of determinism is not theoretical but practical. A practical determinism controls the social and individual life. There is a bondage to custom and tradition. All departments of life, the domestic, public, military, social and religious, are subject to strictest usage. The influence of precedent rules and deviations from established usage are checked before they gain headway. "The beginning of civilization is marked by an intense legality; that legality is the very condition of its existence, the bond which ties it together; but that legality—that tendency to impose a settled customary yoke upon all men and all actions, if it goes on, kills the variability implanted by nature, and makes different men and different ages facsimiles of other men and other ages, as we see them often."

The reasons for the practical determinism ruling early societies are doubtless many and far-reaching; here it may only be suggested that the customs that survived were useful; they enabled the clan or tribe to survive; they may not have been the most useful possible to an ideal and reasoning spectator, but they were on the whole more beneficial than detrimental in the struggle for survival. The customs were thus the conditions of existence of the society; to keep them was to live; to violate them was to die. The keeping of the custom put the present in bondage to the past. Thus while determinism made the societies stable, the absence of freedom made them stationary.

Yet even in primitive societies the determinism was not absolute. A chief or Shaman might occasionally slightly alter precedent. Among the savages of Australia the old men have

the authority to introduce minimal variations in the customs. Here at the very dawn of human society is a glimmer of light betokening the gradual rise as time moves on of a full-orbed reason, progress, and freedom.

Another significant feature of our question as it appears in primitive life is that the gods and spirits, the sources of explanation of natural phenomena in early mythologies, appear as capricious beings, not subject to law. Magic is the art used by primitive man in seeking to control the spirits. Their conduct is only partially explicable and is unreliable. The savage god is such a being as the savage himself would be without his determining customs.

The freedom that is above law, which the savage himself does not possess, he nevertheless assigns to his deities.

The combination of divine fate and human freedom among the primitive Saxons is illustrated in the following quotation from Green: "Behind these [the main gods of the old Saxons] there floated the dim shapes of an older mythology, 'Wyrd', the death-goddess, whose memory lingered long in the 'Weird' of northern superstition; or the Shield-Maidens, the 'mighty women' who, an old rhyme tells us, 'wrought on the battlefield their toil and hurled the thrilling javelins'.....Strong as he might be, man struggled in vain with the doom that encompassed him, that girded his life with a thousand perils and broke it at so short a span. 'To us', cries Beowulf in his last fight, 'To us it shall be as our weird betides, that weird that is every man's lord'. But the sadness with which these Englishmen fronted the mysteries of life and death had nothing in it of the unmanly despair which bids men eat and drink for tomorrow they die. . . . Beowulf himself takes up his strife with the fiend, 'go the weird as it will.' "

In sum, in primitive life determinism controls man and to a degree the gods, that is, in so far as man is a successful magician, while freedom characterizes the gods and to a slight degree man, that is, in so far as those in high authority may change custom. The fortunes of these attributes we have now to follow in the Orient.

The Oriental peoples are distinguished from primitive societies in many ways; the one way that here most concerns us is that the Orientals have developed a conscious theoretical philosophy of life. They have not thrown off the weight of primitive traditions but they have added the weight of an imposing doctrine. Oriental life is controlled by both a practical and a theoretical determinism. The Brahmins, Buddha, and Mahomet teach determinism, though this view of life is offset to a degree in the Orient by the teachings of Confucius, a modified free willist, and of Zoroaster. One of the maxims of the ancient Egyptian sage, Ptah-hotep, dating from about 3580 B. C. runs as follows: "None may know adversity, when it cometh, nor prosperity, when it shall relieve him, for the will of fate is hid from all."

Among the East Indians we meet the doctrine of Karma, by which the deeds in a preexistent life of the soul control the present; among the Mohammedans the fatalistic doctrine of the Will of Allah; among the Chinese the less personal conception of the Will of Heaven. The Koran says: "Every man's fate hath God fastened about his neck." Confucius, suggesting the limitations put by nature upon effort, says: "Rotten wood cannot be carved; a dirt wall won't stand the trowel." And the Hindu Bhartrihari contains the endeavor-inhibiting thoughts: "The possession which the Creator has written upon our forehead, be it small or great, we shall surely attain even in the waste desert; and more than this we can never get, though we be on Mount Meru, whose sides are packed with gold. Therefore, be of good cheer, and spend not your life fruitlessly, pitifully, among the rich.

Behold in the fountain, alike as in the ocean, you shall dip your pitcher full of water." Such a doctrine would not have filled the California and Alaska gold-fields with fortune-seekers. It has helped to keep the Oriental nations inactive and rearward in the march of the world's progress.

There are two exceptions to the theoretical and practical determinism which controls the Orient; one is general and one

special. The general exception applies to the despot or absolute monarch in all the Oriental countries who has a certain amount of liberty in departing from practical custom and in restating what it is conceived Fate has determined. He is the historical descendant of the authoritative old men in primitive societies.

The special exception is the Zoroastrians, or Persian fire-worshippers. The Persian stock is the vigorous and active Aryan. The Persian climate, unlike that of India, never debilitated the native vigor. The Persian dualistic philosophy, distinguishing light and darkness as the two elemental principles, provided for a constant warfare between the hosts of Ormuzd, the god of light, and Ahriman, the god of darkness. To individual man was given freedom of choice as to the army he would join. The only similar early recognition among Oriental peoples of such freedom appears among the Hebrews in the conflict of the prophet Elijah with the prophets of Baal, in which he called upon the people to: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!"

The moral element appears more prominently in Zoroastrianism and in Confucianism than in Brahminism, Buddhism, and Mohammedanism. This means extra emphasis on freedom. The conservatism of Confucianism has played a deterministic role in Chinese life but Confucius himself announced maxims presupposing freedom in the individual. He said: "Rare are they who prefer virtue to the pleasures of sense"; "If you have faults, shrink not from correcting them." "Tsz-kung put to him the question, 'Is there one word upon which the whole life may proceed?' The Master replied, 'Is not Reciprocity such a word? What you do not yourself desire, do not put before others'."

The theologies of the Orient swing between polytheism and pantheism. The many personal gods of polytheism are by nature capricious but partially controlled by magical arts, like those of primitive peoples. The one impersonal god of pantheism is determined by his own nature to be what he is, in consequence of which every illusory existence is also necessarily what it is.

In sum, determinism, both practical and theoretical, rules the Orient, both man and Pan, while freedom appears in the will of the autocrat and in the wills of the lesser divinities, as well as in the wills of the people among the Zoroastrians. In contrast with primitive peoples, in the Orient determinism has added theory to practice and freedom has somewhat enlarged its boundaries.

The Persians, by spirit and history, form a natural transition to the Greeks. Among the Greeks, charming in their variety, we find both determinism and freedom. The theory of Greece is mainly deterministic, though with notable exceptions; the practice of Greece is mainly that of freedom, though again with notable exceptions.

The deterministic theory of Greece centers about the conception of fate. It is possible that this conception was an outgrowth of the customs of reading portents, soothsaying, and visiting oracles. By these customs it was sought to discover the will of the gods. From this habit which was concrete and practical it was easy to pass in time to the abstract and theoretical inference that the content of the future was determined by the will of the gods. What has been willed once for all by the gods was fated to come to pass. This suggestion is in accord with the view that myth springs out of ritual, that creeds arise in deeds.

However this may be, popular thought in Greece clothed the conception of fate in the imagery of the three weird sisters, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, who together spun and clipped the thread of life.

From popular thought the theory of determinism passed into the Greek tragedies in which fate has dominion over men and women and, in some instances, even over gods. Aeschylus makes Prometheus, himself a god serving man by stealing the heavenly fire and therefore punished by Zeus, cry out:

**"Let the whirling blasts of Necessity  
Seize on my body and hurl it  
Down to the darkness of Tartarus,—**



**Yet all he shall not destroy me!"**

Here, as in the case of Beowulf, is the assertion of individuality, though powerless against Necessity.

Sophocles in the *Antigone* makes the chorus say to Creon who has killed his child: "Pray no more now. From his appointed woe man cannot fly."

The materialistic philosophers, such as the Atomists Leucippus and Democritus, naturally advocated determinism. Leucippus said: "Nothing comes into being without a reason, but everything arises from a specific ground and is driven by necessity."

Socrates is an intellectual determinist, holding that action is determined by ideas, good action by knowledge and bad action by ignorance. He attempted to prove that "all things are knowledge, including justice, and temperance, and courage."

One of the many schools founded on the teaching and personality of Socrates was the Megarian. Diodorus Cronus of Caria (died 307 B. C.), a member of this school, taught that only the actual is possible, that the unactual has demonstrated itself through its unactuality to be impossible. This famous proposition passed with the Megarian school into Stoicism.

The Stoics, who first identified the chief good of man with life according to nature, another one of the many philosophical schools deriving from Socrates, were determinists, holding in pantheistic fashion that man's reason is a part of the immanent universal reason. In thus completing the brief review of Greek deterministic theory it may be recalled that one count on which Plutarch rejected the Stoic theodicy was its determinism whereby no one was to blame for vice.

Passing from the deterministic to the Greek libertarian philosophers, we find such names as Prodicus, the Sophist; Plato; Aristotle; the Skeptics, Pyrrho and Aenesidemus; Carneades of the Middle Academy, the Epicureans, and Plotinus of Neo-Platonism.

Prodicus, the great moral teacher among the Sophists, made use in his teaching of "The Choice of Heracles". Xenophon tells how Prodicus used as an object lesson the story of Heracles

choosing virtue and labor rather than vice and ease.

Plato, the greatest pupil of Socrates, extended his master's doctrine on this as on many other points; But he found the problem a hard one, so hard that we are not quite clear how far he did depart from the deterministic position of Socrates. But depart he did. When Plato is not sure of his conclusions, he throws them in the form of a marvelous myth. Such a myth is the tale of Er at the end of *The Republic*. In this myth human souls are represented as choosing a new destiny for themselves at the beginning of each cycle of a thousand years. The proclamation of the free choice by the prophet is the following: "Hear the word of Lachesis, the daughter of Necessity. Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of life and mortality. Your genius will not be allotted to you, but you will choose your genius; and let him who draws the first lot have the first choice, and the life which he chooses shall be his destiny. Virtue is free, and as a man honors or dishonors her he will have more or less of her; the responsibility is with the chooser—God is justified." This mythical but explicit presentation of a free choice once a cycle is followed up in the later *Laws* with the short but plain statement: "But the formation of qualities [*i. e.* whether good or evil] he [God] left to the wills of individuals. For every one of us is made pretty much what he is by the bent of his desires and the nature of his soul." Aristotle, the mind of Plato's school, as Plato called him, and, we may add, the mind of the later mediaeval period, defines will, after a careful analysis in his *Ethics*, as "A deliberate appetite of something within our power." Later he adds: "It follows that goodness, and badness too, are within our power."

The Skeptics, led by Pyrrho (died about 275 B. C), held with the Sophists that opinions in general and ethical opinions in particular did not exist by natural necessity but as a matter of convention; also that the affirmation or denial of a proposition was an act of will. As the Skeptics thus held all propositions loosely, there was ground for freedom of choice between propositions.

Carneades (died 129 B. C.), the leader for many years of the

Middle Academy, out of an ethical interest developed the theory of probability, in opposition to the Stoics, and also illustrated the skeptical doctrine of choice between opinions by speaking in Rome both for and against justice.

The Epicureans were like the Megarians and Stoics in receiving their inspiration from Socrates, but, unlike them, they came to defend the freedom of the will. This they did not so much on the basis of reason as on the basis of inclination. Of the happy man Epicurus says that he "has no belief in necessity, which is set up by some [the Stoics] as the mistress of all things, but he refers some things to fortune, some to ourselves, because necessity is an irresponsible power, and because he sees that fortune is unstable, while our own will is free; and this freedom constitutes, in our case, a responsibility which makes us encounter blame and praise. Since it would be better to follow the fables about the gods than to be a slave to the fate of the natural philosopher; for the fables which are told give us a sketch, as if we could avert the wrath of God by paying him honor; but the other presents us with necessity which is inexorable."

The Platonic traditions are continued by Plotinus, the most original and perhaps the greatest of the Greek philosophers after Aristotle. As Weber summarizes the view of Plotinus on our problem: "The soul is the seat of the free will. It is subject to the allurements of the body and those of the intellect. It may therefore turn toward reason and live a purely intellectual life, but it may also turn toward matter, fall, and become embodied in a low and earthly body." Plotinus himself says: "Since evils are here, and revolve from necessity about this [terrestrial] place, but the soul wishes to fly from evils, it is requisite to fly from hence."

Thus on the whole the best of Greek thought is fairly divided between the deterministic and the libertarian philosophy of human conduct, with perhaps the preponderant weight of authority on the side of freedom.

If we turn to the practical side of Greek life there appears a swing from the absolutistic in the direction of the democratic

standards. As Aristotle says, in the ancient constitutions which Homer represents the kings simply reported their will to the people. Later, of the same general character are the absolute laws of Minos in Crete, Lycurgus in Sparta, Draco and even Solon in Athens, and Rhadamanthus in Boeotia. On the other hand the Greek states were always too independent to unite firmly together for defensive or offensive warfare. Referring to the Greek communities of 500 B. C., Grote says: "Theories of government were there anything but a dead letter: they were connected with emotions of the strongest as well as of the most opposite character. The theory of a permanent ruling One, for example, was universally odious: that of a ruling few, though acquiesced in, was never positively attractive. . . . But the theory of democracy was preeminently seductive; creating in the mass of the citizens an intense positive attachment, and disposing them to voluntary action and suffering on its behalf, such as no coercion on the part of other governments could extort."

Thus, in sum, while Greece shows a division of opinion on the problem of determinism on the theoretical side, it also shows in its history an increasing recognition of freedom among the people on the practical side.

In passing to Rome we carry the literature and philosophy of Greece with us. Virgil continues the Homeric view that the will of the gods once announced becomes the fate of men; also that at times even the gods are subject to fate. Virgil describes how Palinurus, having been drowned, and remaining unburied, cannot find rest in Hades; whereupon he requests of the prophetess with Aeneas that in death at least he may rest in peaceful seats, only to be silenced by her with the words: "Desist to hope by prayer to change the gods' decrees." Jupiter himself is controlled by fate, saying: "Neither do I free men from their obligations: their plans must bring to each his toil, his lot. King Jupiter is the same for all, the fates will find a way."

The Romans also had the mythological figures, the Parcae, or

the three Destinies who presided over the birth, life, and fortunes of men. As with the Greeks, one held the spindle, one drew out the thread of life, and one cut it off.

The issue between determinism and freedom on the theoretical side was continued at Rome by the representatives of the Stoa and the Garden respectively. Roman Stoics and Epicureans did not so much add to the doctrines of Zeno and Epicurus as expound and practice them. As judged by their fruits the Roman devotees of the doctrines of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius were more admirable than those of Horace and Lucretius. Determinism kept the Stoics true to the life of universal reason while freedom too often became license among the Epicureans. A classic Roman recognition of freedom is in the lines of Ovid (*Met.* VII, 20-21); he is giving the story of the Argonauts; Medea has been filled by Venus with an unhappy love for Jason, which her father opposes; here is a conflict between reason and feeling, her father's commands and her own love; in her soliloquy she says: "I see and approve the better, I follow the worse."

The eclectic philosophical system of Cicero leans on the whole toward determinism. The late Roman philosopher, Boetius (died 525 A. D.), found consolation in man's freedom.

On the practical side the Roman government in the republican period embodied to a great degree the ideals of freedom, though in Rome, as in all the ancient nations, the institution of slavery was taken to be an ordination of nature. The embodied freedom of republican Rome Gibbon succinctly describes as follows: "The temperate struggles of the patricians and plebeians had finally established the firm and equal balance of the constitution ; which united the freedom of popular assemblies, with the authority and wisdom of a senate, and the executive powers of a regal magistrate." To be a Roman citizen was a coveted privilege and to enjoy the freedom of the city involved substantial rights.

In the following period of the empire absolutism increased and strength decreased.

As freedom went weakness came. To quote a paragraph from

Gibbon again: "To resume, in a few words, the system of the Imperial government, as it was instituted by Augustus, and maintained by those princes who understood their own interest and that of the people, it may be defined an absolute monarchy disguised by the forms of a commonwealth. The masters of the Roman world surrounded their throne with darkness, concealed their irresistible strength, and humbly professed themselves the accountable ministers of the senate, whose supreme decrees they dictated and obeyed."

The Roman stock as a whole was fitted by nature for initiative, endurance, and achievement. Though superstitious in his devotion to astrology and soothsaying, though recognizing the Parcae among the divinities, the average Roman when he wanted to do something in the world was like Cassius as interpreted by Shakespeare:

**"Men at some time are masters of their fates:  
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."**

In sum, in Rome the theorists are divided between determinism and freedom as represented by Stoicism and Epicureanism, the practice of the government is divided between the freedom of the Republic and the absolutism of the Empire, though all the while the individual Roman was acting as if results devolved upon himself alone.

If we compare the governments of Greece and Rome in their effects upon the welfare of the people, we find that under the ideals of Greek democracy and Roman republicanism the acme of their civilizations was attained, while too much freedom preceded the downfall of Greece and too much absolutism the downfall of Rome. He who runs may read that from the standpoint of practice and government a combination of social determinism and individual freedom works best. An analogous but not demonstrated conclusion on our main issue of determinism vs. freedom would indicate man as partially determined and partially free. Reason may support this conclusion later. If so, the negative side of the argument wins.

At this point in our historical review we go backward a few centuries to introduce a new tradition, the Hebrew. This arrangement will give us a line of straight development through Christianity down to our own day. On the deterministic side of the question it is to be observed that, unlike most other Oriental nations, the conception of fate does not appear in the Old Testament, that is, fate as an impersonal principle allotting destinies to men. The nearest approach to it is in the overwhelming influences of natural circumstances as expressing the ways of God presented in the book of Ecclesiastes. "The Preacher" appears to realize first of all among the Hebrew sages the weakness of man against the course of things. He finds "to everything there is a season", that nothing can be put to what God hath done, nor anything taken from it; he is oppressed by the vanity of human endeavor and comes to hate all his labor wherewith he labored under the sun. Despite the distinctions among men and the distinction between man and fishes and birds, yet "time and chance happeneth to them all". Yet this semi-deterministic writer is full of such maxims of prudence, presupposing freedom, as "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shall find it after many days."

But the *locus classicus* of providential determinism in the Old Testament is the account of the dealings of Jehovah through Moses with Pharaoh. The following quotation will illustrate the type of this dealing: "And Jehovah said unto Moses, When thou goest back into Egypt," see that thou do before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in thy hand: but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go" (Exodus 4:21). This view of the events in Egypt under the oppression of the obstinate Pharaoh was taken up by the prophets (cf. Deut. 3:30 and Isaiah 63: 17) and passed by way of St. Paul into the Christian tradition (cf. Romans 9: 18).

But this deterministic interpretation of Jehovah's dealings with Pharaoh, it is exceedingly interesting to note, is offset by a libertarian rendering of the same events. This second account indeed is older than the first, and it comes out of the mouths of

the Philistine diviners, who, with the burdensome ark of Jehovah on their hands, say to the Philistines: "Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts?" (I Sam. 6:6). Which is the truer interpretation?

Though recognizing the presence of deterministic views in the Old Testament literature, we have now to point out that, on the whole, ancient Hebrew life and thought presuppose freedom, the opposing doctrine being rejected practically and condemned theoretically. The story of the Garden of Eden belongs to the period of moral and religious beginnings in Israel. In this story it is evident that, though the serpent is the occasion of the act of disobedience, the misuse of free will is the real cause. The whole following Mosaic legislation presupposes the ability to obey or disobey, implies responsibility, teaches accountability, and promises rewards and threatens penalties. An Old Testament scholar describes the situation in the asking of a question: "What is presupposed by the legal regime, which gives man the choice between good and evil, blessing and cursing, life and death?" It is of course true that the law exercised to a degree a determining influence in Hebrew life, yet apostasies indicating the abuse of freedom were frequent enough. The call of Elijah to the people to reject the Baalim and accept Jehovah has already been mentioned. It is unquestionable that the clear Hebrew recognition of the moral conscience, implying real choice, has had much to do with the success of Hebraism as embodied in Christianity in its competition with other Oriental religions for Western favor.

We turn to the theoretical recognition of freedom among the Hebrews. Such unsystematic philosophy as the Hebrews developed is found in their so-called wisdom (Hochmah) literature. One of these poetic works, written perhaps in the first century B. C. and preserved in the Apocrypha, is the book of Ecclesiasticus, "the wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach". It is a set of short essays on the main practical questions of life, similar but superior in quality to the familiar book of Proverbs. One of these essays is on free will; it occupies the latter half of



chapter fifteen, which I will here transcribe from the English revised version:

Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away.  
For thou shalt not do the things that he hateth.  
Say not thou, It is he that caused me to err;  
For he hath no need of a sinful man.  
The Lord hateth every abomination;  
And they that fear him love it not.  
He himself made man from the beginning,  
And left him in the hand of his own counsel.  
If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments;  
And to perform faithfulness is of *thine own* good pleasure.  
He hath set fire and water before thee:  
Thou shalt stretch forth thy hand unto whichsoever thou wilt.  
Before man is life and death;  
And whichsoever he liketh, it shall be given him.  
For great is the wisdom of the Lord:  
He is mighty in power, and beholdeth all things;  
And his eyes are upon them that fear him;  
And he will take knowledge of every work of man.  
He hath not commanded any man to be ungodly;  
And he hath not given any man license to sin.

In sum, therefore, Hebrew practice and theory primarily recognize freedom as against a secondary recognition of determinism.

Both the deterministic and the libertarian elements in the Hebrew thought passed over into early Christianity. The two main features of early Christianity are the life of Jesus and the interpretation given that life by the Apostle Paul. It is worthy of note that the Pauline influence makes for determinism while that of Jesus is mainly for free will. This is perhaps natural; in reviewing a finished life, as Paul reviewed that of Jesus, it is easy to regard each stage as a necessary link in the whole chain, thus expressing the will of God; while in living one's unfinished life, as Jesus was doing, it is easy to regard each step as the product of a free choice in the light of all the attendant circumstances.

Paul grew up in the Grecized city of Tarsus where he became familiar with Greek though itself tinged with determinism, especially in its literary expressions. Also he sat at the feet of

the Jewish Rabbi Gamaliel who no doubt presented Hebrew history as a product of the plan of God. But, whatever the sources of Paul's views, in his letter to the law-loving Romans he sets aside the doctrine of justification by works in accord with the Mosaic law in favor of the doctrine of justification by faith, which was associated in his mind with those great deterministic views of foreknowledge, foreordination, and election. "So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Romans 9: 18). This is again the priestly view in the Old Testament of Israel's experience in Egyptian bondage. Using a favorite Oriental figure, he asks: "Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (Romans 9:21). The highwater mark of determinism appears in the following utterances: "For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Romans 8: 29-30). These doctrines were taken up by St. Augustine at the beginning of the mediaeval period and their later fortunes we shall presently trace.

It may be somewhat surprising that, in view of these doctrines that God alone is sole cause of man's salvation, Paul should nevertheless himself have been one of the most active men in the world, fearing lest he be a castaway, and should further have been constantly urging the most practical precepts upon men, such as, "Quench not the spirit". To have his fate written in his forehead makes a Mohammedan not engaged in warfare somewhat lackadaisical; not so Paul. Many Christians since his day have accepted his theory and, perhaps logically, not emulated his practice.

Let us turn now to the recognition of freedom on the part of Jesus. This recognition appears in two ways, in his attitude toward others and in his thought of himself. "What wilt thou?" was his constant attitude toward those he helped. He did not, nay could not, work wonderful, cures where unbelief was present. In indignantly upbraiding the cities of Chorazin,

Bethsaida, and Capernaum, he distinctly indicates that the course of history for the ancient cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom might have been different. In his pathetic lament over Jerusalem he sums all up not by reference to his Father's will but in words indicating deliberate choice: "And ye would not." Likewise in his thought of himself, when facing the supreme crisis of his life, he recognizes freedom in the words: "I lay down my life of myself. No man taketh it from me." He always recognized his Father's will as existent but never as compelling his own will; rather the Father's will he freely chose to do. "My meat is to do my Father's will." The agony of Gethsemane was due in part to the shrinking of his own will from what appeared to be the Father's will, which was mastered by that greatest affirmation of will in extreme effort, saying: "Thy will, not mine, be done."

The practicality of Paul was shown in his activity despite his theory. The practicality of Jesus appears in his theory despite his own decisions. Having affirmed his will by denying it in self-surrender, he straightway took an objective attitude toward what he himself had decided should be and regarded it as determined, saying, "The Son of Man indeed goeth as it hath been determined." It is best to regard what one has temporally fixed as eternally fixed; this is what Jesus did. Both Paul and Jesus acted as though all depended upon themselves but thought and prayed as though all depended upon God. The difference was that Paul moved from thought to action, but Jesus from action to thought.

The early church fathers are divided among themselves on the question of man's determinism or freedom. Both Greek and Latin fathers are to be found on each side of the question. On the deterministic side are Justin Martyr, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome. The heretical Gnostics were also determinists. On the side of free will were Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, and Chrysostom; also the opponents of St. Augustine, Pelagius and Coelestius. We will not go into the separate views of these defenders and opponents of determinism, but will take the controversy at its height

between St. Augustine and Pelagius as illustrative material.

St. Augustine (353-430), first a pagan teacher of rhetoric, then the Christian bishop of Hippo, gathered up into his system all that went before him in both paganism and Christianity, stamped it with his own powerful personality, and passed it on to the static mediaeval period. Much he accepted, much he rejected, all he systematized, and this in a vigorous rhetorical style that makes his writings still models today. St. Augustine was a determinist. He held that God was free, that He made man free, that man lost all his freedom by his first sin, that man cannot attain salvation because of this original sin, that God elected some to be saved by grace, predetermining them before the world was. The human will has now no power of itself, consequently all initiative in man's regeneration and salvation must come from the Holy Spirit. These views go back to St. Paul; they also go forward through mediaevalism to the reformers, Luther and Calvin, and from them into modern thought.

The great opponent of St. Augustine was Pelagius, a monk, coming to Rome, it is interesting to note, from the North, probably Wales, and bringing a new spirit with him. It was the beginning of the unended conflict between Northern individuality and Southern absolutism. From the writings of his successful opponents we gather Pelagius denied the effects of original sin and the consequent necessity of grace and asserted complete free will and the possibility of sinlessness. Associated with Pelagius was an Irish monk, Coelestius. Their views were repeatedly condemned as heretical, though they continued to be advocated in their original or modified form for some three centuries.

In Jesus Christianity was essentially a life; under the influence of Paul and Greek philosophy it became a thought; under the influence of Roman practicality it became a world-power. All these elements blended into a unity constitute mediaeval Christianity. The two view-points of determinism and freedom continue to oppose each other during this period, but

on the whole determinism is orthodox and dominant.

During the mediaeval period we find the scholastic doctors divided between the leadership of St. Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. The points of division were many, one of them was on our question. The Thomists, as the followers of St. Thomas were called, were determinists. To him the will of God was absolutely determined by His intelligence; this is intellectualism; the freedom of God is identical with necessity. The same is true of the human will; it lacks freedom of choice; the origin of sin is not the abuse of freedom but in sensuality. The Scotists, as the followers of Duns Scotus were called, were free willists. Scotus held with St. Augustine that God was free, and with Aristotle that both God and man were free. Man may will or not will—this is formal freedom; or he may will this or that—this is material freedom. Holding the will to be independent of ideas, Scotus was one of the great voluntarists of the world; he was never canonized on account of these Pelagian views.

There were many other great mediaeval advocates of the one side or the other. Anselm, bishop of Canterbury, was a determinist. The Arabian philosophy, as illustrated by the great commentator Averrhoes, as well as the mystical tendencies, as illustrated by Meister Eckhart, were deterministic. Natural explanations will occur to the reader, in the light of what was said above about Mohammedan fatalism and Indian mystical pantheism. The Jewish philosopher, Avicenna, the great predecessor of John Locke, defended freedom. The suggestion itself that men divide on this question according to native stock and racial tradition favors determinism.

On the practical side mediaeval life and thought presents us with determinism rather than freedom. The church is the determining institution, controlling both the living and thinking of society, and introducing into a very complex society that unity so characteristic of the mediaeval period. Such liberty of thinking as was allowed had to be done within, not beyond, the doctrines of the church.

The modern period connects immediately with Thomism and Scotism on this question, as the mediaeval period connected immediately with Augustinianism and Pelagianism, as those again with the views of Paul and Jesus. The names and the tendencies are many and strong here on each side; we cannot do more than briefly sketch them.

The orthodox theology of the Reformation was deterministic, as illustrated in the writings of Luther, who was an Augustinian monk, and of Calvin, who also went back to Augustine. Luther had one main doctrine, that of justification by faith, but, unlike Calvin, he did not make his central doctrine the basis of a system. According to Luther each doctrine had to be proved independently of the others and directly from Scripture. One of his writings was *De Servo Arbitrio*, to which Erasmus replied with his *Tractatus De Libero Arbitrio*. One of the proof passages from Scripture for the servitude of the fallen unregenerate natural will was the words of Jesus: "Without me ye can do nothing." Still a close connection exists between the two independent doctrines of justification by faith and the bondage of the will. The faith that justifies is itself the gift of God; the doctrine excludes all works, even thoughts, of man as aids; hence a free will, if present, were unavailing. Another connection exists between Christ's complete redemption and a determined will; a free will would entitle man to some recognition in the work of his own redemption. Still further, a free will would detract from the free grace of God which gives man saving faith.

Calvin's main doctrine was that of predestination which he made the center of a system. He taught that the eternal destiny of the individual is predestined by God's original purpose. Like St. Augustine he held that Adam had free will but through his abuse of freedom he and his posterity became depraved. Both Luther and Calvin aimed thus to revive an older, as against the mediaeval, tradition of the church. Calvinism spread from Geneva into France, the Netherlands, and Scotland, where it was heralded by John Knox. Its best exponent in America was Jonathan Edwards. Predestination has remained a part of the

orthodox doctrine of Presbyterianism. Article III of the "*Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith*", which is entitled: "Of the Eternal Purpose," is as follows: "We believe that the eternal, wise, holy, and loving purpose of God embraces all events, so that while the freedom of man is not taken away nor is God the author of sin, yet in His providence He makes all things work together in the fulfillment of His sovereign design and the manifestation of His glory; wherefore, humbly acknowledging the mystery of this truth, we trust in His protecting care and set our hearts to do His will." Article VII, "Of Election," begins as follows: "We believe that God, from the beginning, in His own good pleasure, gave to His Son a people, an innumerable multitude, chosen in Christ unto holiness, service, and salvation."

Among the post-Reformation Catholics deterministic views similar to those of St. Augustine were held by the short-lived Jansenists, the great opponents of the Jesuits.

In modern philosophy determinism is advocated by several distinct schools, widely remote from each other on many points but agreeing on this point. Among these schools are to be reckoned that of English empiricism, represented by Bacon, Hume, Priestley, and Spencer; the materialism of Hobbes, Condillac, and Baron von Holbach; the skepticism of Voltaire; the rationalism of Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Wolf; the pantheism of Schleiermacher, Schelling, and von Hartmann; the pantheism of Schopenhauer; certain Neo-Hegelianism like that of Bradley; and the naturalism of Nietzsche. It must be left to the reader, if he is interested, to see how the presuppositions of each member of this array of tendencies lead naturally to the deterministic position.

Reverting to the advocates of freedom, we find them stronger in the modern period than ever before, not excepting Plato and Aristotle. The new things in modern life, the things that make modern life modern, are based on freedom. This is true in the region of theory, in theology, and philosophy, and in the region of practice, as we shall see.

In theology the opponent of Luther was the Catholic Erasmus; of Calvin was Arminius, as the opponent of St. Thomas was Duns Scotus, as the opponent of St. Augustine was Pelagius. Jacob Harmensen was a great Dutch theologian, who, after the fashion of the earlier Renaissance scholars, Latinized his name into Arminius. He was a minister in Amsterdam before becoming a professor in the famous University of Leyden. We know his views better than those of Pelagius as he was less successfully opposed. Among his views the two that concern us here are that man may resist divine grace and that man may fall from divine grace. Arminius died in 1609. Within a few years after his death the Synod of Dort condemned his doctrines and the civil power enforced its decrees.

But the Arminian views seemed to meet a need and spread rapidly. Macaulay says: "The Arminian doctrine, a doctrine less austere logical than that of the early Reformers, but more agreeable to the popular notions of the divine justice and benevolence, spread fast and wide." Archbishop Laud represented the Arminian views in the Church of England, and forbade his clergy to preach on predestination. Likewise John Wesley, from whom sprang modern Methodism, was an Arminian. The survival of the Arminian views and their advocacy in so many pulpits, coupled with the growing practice beginning in the nineteenth century of sending Christian missionaries to foreign peoples, have lessened to an appreciable degree the rigorous determinism of even Calvinistic communions.

In modern philosophy Descartes, standing at its portal, recognized free will but regarded it as the parent of error; his successor, Malebranche, admitted its existence but considered it a defect, a negative rather than a positive existence.

The critical philosophy of Kant maintained freedom to be a postulate of the moral life; man ought, therefore he can. Man's freedom of will is transcendent, that is, it is capable of initiating a new causal series. Fichte, moral child of Kant, became an apostle of moral, intellectual, and political freedom. Hegel, the absolute Idealist, defined the person as the free



individual. This German transcendentalism has passed by way of Coleridge into English, and of Emerson into American, literature and life.

The English empiricist Locke, unlike Bacon and Hume, believed in freedom. He writes: "Liberty, it is plain, consists in a power to do, or not to do; to do, or forbear doing, as we will. This cannot be denied. But this seeming to comprehend only the actions of a man consecutive to volition, it is further inquired, 'whether he be at liberty to will, or no?' And to this it has been answered, that in most cases a man is not at liberty to forbear the act of volition: he must exert an act of his will, whereby the action proposed is made to exist, or not to exist. But yet there is a case wherein a man is at liberty in respect of willing, and that is the choosing of a remote good as an end to be pursued."

The English subjective idealist, Bishop Berkeley, in opposing materialism was led to oppose determinism also. He writes: "It is self-evident, that there is such a thing as motion: and yet there have been found philosophers, who, by refined reasoning, would undertake to prove that there was no such thing. Walking before them was thought the proper way to confute those ingenious men. It is no less evident that man is a free agent: and though by abstracted reasonings you should puzzle me, and seem to prove the contrary, yet so long as I am conscious of my own actions, this inward evidence of plain fact will bear me up against all your reasonings, however subtle and refined."

The Scotch "common sense" school also defended freedom, representatives of which would be Thomas Reid (died 1796) and Sir William Hamilton. Reid gives three arguments for freedom, viz., (1) there is a natural conviction of freedom of the will; (2) man is morally responsible for his actions, which he could not be unless the will were free; and (3) man can do what he has previously resolved to do. Carlyle thunders against determinism in "The Everlasting No" of *Sartor Resartus*. James Martineau, through his ethical interest, likewise argues for freedom, surrendering the foreknowledge of God in its favor.

Lotze subordinated mechanism to freedom, as did Fechner also on his basis of psychophysical parallelism.

Certain Neo-Hegelians like Professor Royce and Miss Calkins oppose Bradley in his negative view of human freedom and seek to reconcile the Hegelianism "of the right" with the doctrine of freedom. In their own independent way Wundt in Germany and Maine de Biran in France have defended freedom.

The newest philosophical movement, characteristically American, that of pragmatism, has staunchly advocated freedom, in the person of William James in America, of F. C. S. Schiller in England, and of Henri Louis Bergson in France. Of this movement, being a present-day issue, we will make a more specific review later in the argument.

Turning to the practical side of modern life, it is evident that the French Revolution, pitiable carnage that it was, really destroyed the old deterministic, absolutistic, autocratic, order of society and initiated modern political freedom. Rousseau, its apostle, had no institutional sense.

In writing of the age of Louis XIV Guizot says: "It is here that we discover the incorrigible evil and the infallible effect of absolute power. . . . What France, under Louis XIV, essentially wanted, was political institutions and forces, independent, subsisting of themselves, and, in a word, capable of spontaneous action and resistance. The ancient French institutions, if they merited that; name, no longer existed: Louis XIV completed their ruin. He took no care to endeavor to replace them by new institutions; they would have cramped him, and he did not choose to be cramped. All that appeared conspicuous at that period was will, and the action of central power. The government of Louis XIV was a great fact, a fact powerful and splendid, but without roots. Free institutions are a guarantee, not only of the wisdom of governments, but also of their duration. No system can endure except by means of institutions. . . . Energetic characters disappear with independent situations, and dignity of soul alone gives birth to security of rights." The free institutions which give stability

with progress to societies are the golden mean between absolute despotism and social anarchy; they are freely supported by the mature life, they give shape to young life; they combine a measure of determinism with a measure of freedom.

Modern political freedom does not mean the entire absence of a determining order—that were anarchy; it means that the people themselves determine the order which in turn is to determine them and their children. Modern popular government is really a government by a few chosen by a majority in the interest supposedly of all.

As never before, modern peoples have freedom of self-government, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of action, freedom from caste, freedom of initiative. The main principle restrictive of freedom is that one shall in no way infringe upon the equal freedom or rights of another person. Modern freedom is so unlimited that the question has been raised in some quarters whether we have not too much freedom. On the practical side in modern life the deterministic types of society have gained nothing and lost much. The state has shown itself that progressive adjustable institution which the church because of the conservatism of orthodoxy was unable and unwilling to become; for this reason we see the modern free state assuming functions that in the mediaeval period belonged exclusively to the church, for example, education.

In sum, on the issue between determinism and freedom, the modern period shows us a sharp and fairly equal division in theory, both theological and philosophical, but in practice a preponderant emphasis upon freedom.

Thus we have reviewed in very brief and inadequate fashion the course of the world's history, in theory and practice, on our question. We have seen young societies, that is, those near the beginnings of civilization, determined by custom and habit, like children; and we have seen older societies, that is, those nearer our own time, initiating progress, change, and freedom, like

adolescents casting off the restraints of childhood. What of this age-long view of our problem? To those to whom history is meaningless, nothing; but to those to whom history is the progressive solution of human problems, much indeed. If, as Hegel said, history is logic in action, or, if, as popular thought has it, history is philosophy teaching by example, the past course of things indicates the direction in which the truth of our problem is to be found.

In accord with the above thought, we have seen in the course of this review the amount of determinism, both in society and in the individual, both in practice and in theory, decreasing, and the amount of freedom correspondingly increasing. Historically, determinism has been the waning orthodoxy and freedom the waxing heresy. The conflict has been long and hard and its end is not yet. The old order of things still would crush the new and the new order of things still would modify or annihilate the old. Determinism represents the finite crust and shell of social, habit; freedom the infinite returning spring of the eternal life. Determinism is the check man would put on God's course in the world; freedom is the progress God intends for man in the world. We cannot dispense with some amount of determinism, to do which were chaos; nor with some degree of freedom, to do which were stagnation. As a philosophy of life determinism has this disadvantage, *viz.*, that it has room for no freedom at all; whereas, on the other hand, freedom has this advantage, *viz.*, that it does have room for much determinism. For determinism holds that all acts are determined, while freedom holds only that some acts are free. The conclusion of our historical argument must thus appear again later as a part of the negative side of the case. Whether this historical argument has been correctly drawn or not, deterministic readers will be quick to detect.

We have drawn an argument from the movement in the history of the argument in behalf of the argument itself. The fact that theory and practice have historically moved away from determinism toward freedom indicates to the optimist a

measure of truth in the doctrine of freedom. This involves a certain philosophy of history on this problem which is nowhere better sketched perhaps than by Guizot, who writes with bold imagination as follows:

“Thus man advances in the execution of a plan which he has not himself conceived, or which, perhaps, he does not even understand. He is the intelligent and free artificer of a work that does not belong to him. He does not recognize or comprehend it till a later period, when it manifests itself outwardly and in realities; and even then he understands it but very incompletely. Yet it is by him, it is by the development of his intellect and his liberty that it is accomplished. Conceive a great machine, of which the idea resides in a single mind, and of which the different pieces are confided to different workmen, who are scattered and who are strangers to one another; none of them knowing the work as a whole, or the definitive and general result to which it concurs, yet each executing with intelligence and liberty, by rational and voluntary acts, that of which he has the charge. So is the plan of Providence upon the world executed by the hand of mankind; thus do the two facts which manifest themselves in the history of civilization co-exist; on the one hand, its fatality, that which escapes science and the human will, and on the other, the part played therein by the intellect and liberty of man, that which he infuses of his own will by his own thought and inclination.”

In the teaching of history to emphasize the causal connection of events is informational, to emphasize the contributions of personalities is inspirational. Both methods have an element of truth.

We now turn to the statement of the issue whose history and whose historic significance we have attempted to sketch.

### CHAPTER 3: THE ISSUE, WITH PRELIMINARY REMARKS

SHOULD we study the history of the different definitions that have been given to the term "freedom of the will" with a view to discovering the essential element in them all, it would be next to impossible to succeed. For our present purposes it will be enough to indicate some of these varying definitions and to select the one that covers no ambiguity and on which the contestants can truly lock horns. Among the many conceptions of freedom that have been held are these twelve: To act unhindered by external restraint (civil and juristic) ; to act without a reason or interest ("the liberty of indifference") ; to act or not to act (Locke) ; to act in conformity with one's own reason or nature (Spinoza) ; to act above the temporal causal nexus (Kant) ; to act against reason with passion, *i. e.*, to do wrong (Augustine) ; to act also against passion with reason, *i. e.* to do right (Pelagius) ; to act in accord with nature (Stoics) ; self-determination in accord with reason (Hegel) ; to act by chance (James) ; to act in a new way further indefinable (Bergson) ; to act in either of two or more ways contemplated. Some of the views amount in the end to the same thing, *e. g.*, those of the Stoics, Spinoza, and Hegel, and in these instances what is eulogized as freedom is hardly distinguishable from determinism.

The last of these meanings of freedom is the one we shall select as making the issue clear, unambiguous, and sharply joined. This view suggests the questions: Can a man do differently from what he does do? Could any different thing ever have been done by anybody than that which they did do? Is the future of each individual already written in the nature of things, or "in his forehead?" as the Mohammedans say. Is some such force as fate, or predestination, or necessity, or heredity, or environment, or any or all of these an adequate explanation of the events of an individual's life without reference to any ability of his own to do otherwise than he does do? Or, in social terms, since society is the big individual, are its ways also determined? Is the course which history has taken, with all its failures and successes, precisely the one it had to

take? Is its future already in the womb of time waiting to be born? Could an omniscient mind knowing the sum total of present efficient causes write the prophecy of the future with the same facility as the history of the past?

To all these questions the determinists answer man and society are determined by efficient causes working out but one inevitable result; the free willists answer man and society cooperate with the efficient causes in shaping themselves partly at least toward their own ends. To the determinist most causes are efficient; to the free willist some causes are final. To the determinist the possible is only the future actual, and the actual is only the past possible; to the free willist the possible is one of several things that may be made to happen, and the actual is the one thing that did happen or was made to happen. To the determinist the future, is as fixed as the past, to the free willist the future is not fixed but is in process of being fixed by the choices men make in the present. To the determinist the sense of the evitable is delusory, to the free willist the sense of the inevitable is delusory.

As the two sets of propositions are mutually contradictory, only one can be true in its present unmodified form. Both cannot be right. Either all events are determined or some events are not determined, there is no middle ground; if the former is true, the latter is false, and if the latter is true, the former is false. Determinism holds the former position; libertarianism the latter. The issue could not be more sharply drawn. By letting down the bars at all, determinism becomes its contradictory. Whatever relative truth there may be in the doctrine of determinism, and there is undoubtedly much, is consistent with freedom; but if determinism is not the whole truth, free will has won its case. Whatever may have been the form of the issue in the past, its form today is between a determinism that is universal and a freedom that is relative.

From a tactical standpoint the advantage is thus with the negative, defended by the free willist. The determinist supports a universal affirmative proposition: every act is determined; a single exception disproves his case. The free willist supports a

particular negative proposition: some acts are not determined (necessarily implying: some acts are free). The whole difficulty of the question is thus condensed, on the negative side, into demonstrating one single free-will act. Such a demonstration it has never been possible to make to the satisfaction of the determinist, as it has been possible to demonstrate in physics to the satisfaction of skeptics on the point that light beams exert a pressure upon the objects they illuminate.

The logical obligation of proof, further, ordinarily rests on the affirmative. In this case, however, in view of the absence of proof hitherto, in view of the fact that the question itself hardly admits of proof in the strict sense of the term, in view also of the further fact that ages and peoples and men of reason have been so divided on the issue, as our historical review indicated, it may be fairly claimed that the *onus probandi* is divided. The affirmative must of course seek to prove what it claims; the negative likewise must advance a positive case, with reasons, and not claim the decision simply on the basis of a possibly successful denial.

Because of the lack of demonstration, hitherto at least, the issue is essentially philosophical, that is, speculative, not scientific. The issue is scientific only in the sense that sooner or later a considerable knowledge of scientific results, methods, and aims is involved in its discussion. But this is true of any philosophical inquiry. On this point I should dissent from the findings of Johnson in his acute monograph, who holds that the issue is essentially one of psychophysics. No one of the ultimate human issues is essentially a matter of a single modern specialized science.

In its present stage at least the discussion is consequently one of probability, not of certainty. It is one of those profound and far-reaching problems upon which all available results from all sources of human knowledge have to be massed in the hope of reaching a reasonable and preponderant probability, not a mathematical certainty. This is no discouragement to those who walk by faith, not sight. What we seek is the better reason for pinning faith to one side rather than the other.



The leading characteristic of Oriental and even Greek thinking is its objectivity; the leading characteristic of modern Western thinking, due perhaps most to Immanuel Kant, is its subjectivity. These characteristics emerge in the discussion of our problem. The Oriental explains himself by that which is without; the Occidental by that which is within. The question, is the will determined? suggests to the Oriental mind an external controlling fate of some kind; to the Western modern mind an internal controlling motive. On the other hand, the question, is the will free? means nothing to the Oriental mind, while to the Western mind it means free attention. Professor James particularly has identified attention with the essence of will in his psychology. In this language of the inner life, since a man executes the ideas to which he attends, the problem may be formulated in this way: has man any power to direct his attention? Do the ideas that come determine his attention or does his attention determine the course of his ideas? On this point each reader has some introspective evidence.

It has been intimated already several times in the course of this discussion that while determinism, if it exists, is absolute, freedom, for man at least, is only relative. At this point let us indicate some of the limitations of choice admitted by modern knowledge which at least make freedom relative, if at most they do not altogether exclude it.

Choice is real and its importance is critical but its limitations are many. It sounds contradictory to speak of the limitations of free choice; really, however, it is only paradoxical. Such freedom as man possesses is not unlimited. Freedom to do otherwise than he does do in some instances he seems to possess, but even this amount of freedom which saves his dignity is not without its limits, which we are now concerned to indicate.

(1) Motives. Choice presupposes motives, or ends of action. There is no choice without motive, there is no "liberty of indifference." You cannot choose anything at any time, but only something at some time. Even not to choose is to choose. Choice does not provide motives; it

may strengthen motives by attention, and it selects motives. Choice is thus not independent entirely of motive.

(2) Habit. Choice is likely to be in line with habit. This is the more true as time advances. It is possible to break a habit of long standing by effort, but it is not probable. Habit limits the ease and efficiency of our choice when choice opposes habit. Ordinarily in the field of habit our choice is to follow the line of least resistance, if we deliberate and choose at all in this field. Though habits in this way limit choice, it is important to remember that in the first instance habits may have been begun by choice. This is more true, however, of the habits begun in adolescence than of those begun in childhood.

(3) Capacity. To each person is given by heredity a set of capacities. These capacities may be developed but they cannot be augmented. They set limits to successful choices. When the thing chosen is beyond our capacity, the choice is a failure; it may be a failure or a success when the thing chosen is within our capacity. It is the part of wisdom to make choices for one's personal future only in the light of the knowledge of one's capacities. To know, to accept, to work within one's limitations is requisite for successful living.

(4) Opportunity. This is a frequent but not universal limitation of choice. A choice is likely to be of something that offers. We work and wait and then some unexpected opportunity arises before us. Rarely do we choose to make opportunities where none exist. Such efforts are likely to be factitious, unless they are the product of genius. Like capacity, opportunity is a gift, the gift of environment. The more complex the environment, the more numerous the opportunities, the greater the range of choice. The simpler the social environment, the fewer the choices; the more complex the environment, the greater the number of choices, and the greater the physical and mental strain. Though not making opportunities arise, a man may choose to move out of a simple into a complex environment where more opportunities will

arise. But without opportunity there is no choice.

(5) Labor. Having made your choice, you must work it out. To choose is not to have, but only to begin to have. The choice is one link in a chain, whose antecedents include reflection and whose consequents include labor. Choice is like putting one's hands to the plough—the ploughing has still to be done. Labor is a posterior limit to choice.

(6) Fatigue. The physiological state of diminished nerve cells due to activity is fatigue. It limits the sanity of choice. In fatigue, there is lessened inhibition, with consequently less deliberation and less clarity of judgment. We are off guard when fatigued, and so more likely to follow impulse than reason. Choice operates best at a high level of physical efficiency.

(7) In scope. Choices are limited in scope; most action is due to other antecedents, like instinct, impulse, imitation, suggestion, habit. Our real choices are few though momentous. In quantitative terms there is not much real rational deliberation in life. The reason for this condition is that one choice may initiate a long train of action, even a whole life-time of endeavor, requiring thereafter only minor choices in accord with the initial major choice.

These various limitations of choice must not be construed as setting aside altogether the fact of choice but only as providing for it a proper setting.

In simple societies, with their regular and monotonous routine, the occasions for choice are few, though they may be important. In complex societies, with their multiplicity of interests and engagements, the occasions for choice are continual, with great consequent responsibility. The larger the life one leads in society, the more numerous the choices, and the more onerous the strain on the nervous system. The primitive and Oriental societies are comparatively simple; the Western societies are complex. As societies evolve from simple to complex conditions, it is natural that choice should appear as a more prominent variation in the higher voluntary life of

man. Thus choices signify a complex and recently evolved social fabric.

Let us state the question thus: Is the will determined? The plan of discussing the question will be, in somewhat scholastic form, to state, first the arguments for an affirmative answer, then to rebut these arguments, then to state the arguments for the negative answer, parrying objections at the same time. This mode of presentation will conform to what was indicated above as to the burden of proof and at the same time will correspond with the development of free institutions as we progress from East to West, and thus our conclusions will harmonize with what appears to be the immanent dialectic of human history.

We come then to the arguments in favor of determinism.

#### CHAPTER 4: THE ARGUMENTS FOR DETERMINISM

IN presenting these arguments our purpose is to be succinct, systematic, comprehensive, and as convincing as the case allows. To this end the arguments have been grouped under related headings, nine in all, that seemed appropriate. These arguments have not been drawn from specific determinists but represent a general condensation of the main features in the deterministic view of life. As we read we may feel that we all might be determinists on the basis of these arguments; at least it were well for us so to feel before passing to any criticisms later. The arguments follow:

1. The argument from physics. This argument rests on the hypothesis of the conservation of physical energy. According to this hypothesis the sum total of physical energy in the world is a constant, subject to transformation from one form to another, as from heat to light, but not subject either to increase or diminution. This means that any movement of any body is entirely explicable in terms of antecedent physical conditions. This means that the deeds of the human body are mechanically caused by preceding conditions of body and brain without any reference whatsoever to the mind of the individual, to his intents and purposes. This means that the will of man is not one of the contributing causes to his action, that his action is physically determined in all respects. If a state of will, which is mental, caused an act of the body, which is physical, by so much would the physical energy of the world be increased, which is contrary to the hypothesis universally adopted by physicists. Hence to physics the will of man is not a *vera causa* in explaining physical movement. Is there any flaw to be found in this argument?

2. The argument from biology. The discussions of evolution during the latter half of the nineteenth century brought this argument to the front. The argument rests upon the hypothesis of biology that any organism is adequately explained by reference to its heredity and environment. These are the two real forces the diagonal of whose parallelogram

explains fully the movements of the organism. Any creature is a compound of capacities and reactions to stimuli. The capacities it receives from heredity, the stimuli come from the environment. The responses referable to the mentality of the animal are the effects of inherited tendencies on the one hand and of the stimuli of the environment on the other hand. The sources of explanation are deemed adequate for the lower animals; why not also for man, the higher animal?

3. The argument from physiology. As we pass from physics on the one hand to biology and physiology on the other, from the physical to the natural sciences, it is to be observed that the natural sciences, dealing with animate matter, have borrowed their methods of explanation from the physical sciences of physics and chemistry, that deal with inanimate matter. Science today tends to reject any form of "vitalism" as a principle of explanation, "vitalism" implying that the living principle is in some sense a cause. This will clearly appear in the argument for determinism based on physiology.

This argument rests on the hypothesis made famous by Huxley that man is a conscious automaton. The existence of consciousness cannot easily be denied by any man. But its efficacy is denied by this physiological theory. All the actions of man conform to the automatic type, despite their complexity, and these actions are accompanied by consciousness, which, however, is not in the chain of causal phenomena but stands outside as an "epi-phenomenon", to use Huxley's word. The individual in his deeds is really a vast complex of reflex actions, an aggregate of physical forces balanced against each other. Man is a conscious machine whose acts, however, are in no sense attributable to his conscious purposes.

This theory that men are machines may be repellant to our feelings but there are many reasons that make it attractive to the scientific intellect. One might object that the deeds of men are too complicated to be those of a machine undirected by consciousness, but, as Spinoza urged, we do not really know the limits of the body's actions, as any somnambulist unguided

by his waking consciousness would illustrate. The theory, furthermore, is characterized by that simplicity so dear to the scholastic and the scientist alike as a sign of truth. The theory gives a continuous principle of explanation of conduct according to the theory of reflex action, without appealing to a non-physical and interrupting cause. Really, too, it is unknown just how consciousness could move a molecule in the brain, though the popular mind is ready to assert that it does. Furthermore, this view is in harmony with the theory generally accepted by science of the uniformity of nature, subject to no interruptions from a non-physical source. If man is a conscious automaton, an act of freewill whereby choice determined conduct would be a miracle. But it is against all the foundations of science to allow a miracle, in the sense of the temporary suspension of the natural order. In physiology the soul is no cause. It is very natural that the regular practitioners, brought up on strictly scientific physiology, should reject the mental healers of every type, and that on theoretical as well as practical grounds.

4. The law of causation. It is evident from the arguments already urged above that they each turn upon a certain use of the law of causation. We must now state the argument based upon this law. The law of causation is one which no man would care, to deny; it simply and undeniably asserts that every effect has its cause. No one indeed can think otherwise. Causation, in fact, as Kant showed, is one of the ways in which we must think; it is, as he says, an *a priori* form of thought; we did not learn from experience to think causally, but rather by thinking causally we help to constitute experience. The mind does not so much experience cause as cause experience.

Upon this basis the argument for determinism proceeds as follows: Like effects have like causes, the effect is like the cause, the effect is in fact the cause transformed, as the lightning is the effect of the preceding electrical conditions. Now human action is of course a physical effect; hence we

must expect to find only a physical cause; hence any nonphysical, psychical cause is from the nature of the case precluded, hence of course the human will effects nothing. The actions of a man, a dog, a tree, a stone, all are due alike to antecedent physical conditions which alone as causes determine the effects. We no longer explain the lightning in psychical terms as the bolts of Jove, no more should we explain a man's deeds by reference to the intention of his soul.

5. The argument from science's philosophy of nature. This argument has been somewhat anticipated in the preceding paragraph. It is but a generalization of all the four preceding arguments. A philosophy of nature is a general theory explanatory of all the occurrences of nature. Now the ideal of scientific explanation in physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, and everywhere is mechanical. Events do not happen because anybody or any will wants them to happen; they happen because they have to happen; they happen because they must. And it is the business of science to find this necessary connection between the occurrences of nature. The universe, by this hypothesis, whole and part, is governed by the action of mechanical law. The reign of law is universal. Man is a very small creature upon a small earth which is itself a comparatively small planet in one of the smaller solar systems of an indefinitely large number of solar systems which partially fill infinite space. The universe is a physical mechanism in which law rules, and man is but a least part of this universal machine. How then can he do otherwise than he does do? A single free-will act would introduce caprice, whim, chance, into a universe whose actions are so mechanically determined that an omniscient observer of the present could predict infallibly all futurity.

In presenting these arguments for determinism it will be evident to the initiated that as indicated at the outset, I am not transcribing the particular views of any single determinist in the history of human thought but am simply seeking to present, as in a panorama, the spirit of determinism and its foundations.



Suppose now we pass from the objective sciences of nature to the subjective sciences of man, to the sciences that study mental things, in order to see how determinism defends itself here in the very regions of will.

6. The argument from psychology. The typical subjective science is psychology. The last fifty years of the wonderful nineteenth century saw psychology, hitherto rational and introspective, invaded by the scientific methods of observation experimentation, and explanation. Since the methods of science exclude freedom of the will, it is natural that most scientific psychologists today are, as psychologists at least, determinists. The lamented Professor James is a noted exception, but his psychology has been most criticized by his fellows just on the ground of his "unscientific" retention of freedom of the will. As illustrating the contemporary attitude toward freedom the following somewhat contemptuous and evasive reference may be cited: "We may prate as much as we please about the freedom of the will, no one of us is wholly free from the effects of these two great influences [heredity and environment]. Meantime, each of us has all the freedom any brave, moral nature can wish, *i. e.* the freedom to do the best he can, firm in the belief that however puny his actual accomplishment there is no better than one's best." The question is not whether we are "wholly free" from these influences but whether we are at all free.

The psychological defenders of determinism refer to "the working hypothesis of psychology", *viz.*, there is no mental state without a corresponding brain-state, that the brain-state is to be regarded as the explanation of the mental state since successive mental states have no quantitative measurable relations, that the brain-state is itself to be explained not by reference in turn to the mental state but by reference to the preceding brain-state. Thus the chain of physical causation is unbroken; it is self-explanatory; it also explains the mental series; but the mental series in turn explains nothing on the physical side. This working hypothesis does effectually exclude,

the conscious will from all efficaciousness. In favor of this hypothesis as a working basis for psychology it is to be remarked that our modern knowledge of localization of brain functions, of the aphasias, of the insanities, is largely dependent upon it.

Psychology also emphasizes our ignorance respecting the real—relations of mind and brain, and emphasizes our inability to imagine just how attention could change a brain-state, though just such an effect is attributed to attention in some theories of free will.

Psychology as a science of mind also has its presuppositions respecting law. If the mental region is to be understood, it also must have its laws. These laws must be without any exception such as free will would imply. It is the business of psychology as a science to deny exceptions and discover laws. Indeed it has already made a beginning in such discovery, such as Weber's and Fechner's psychophysical law, the law of association of ideas, the laws of memory, Wundt's "heterogony of ends" etc. Some of these laws have not yet reached the exactness in formulation that may be anticipated later but they are a beginning.

One of these laws affects our present question intimately. It is the law of motive. It asserts there is no action of will without a motive and that the strongest motive determines the will. Action is always in accord with the strongest motive and the motives are provided by the heredity or the environment or both. How could one choose to follow the weaker of two motives?

Psychologists are better aware than others of the sense of freedom revealed to introspection. Men often feel they are free to decide in either of two ways. Such a feeling, however, the psychologists do not consider as proof of the fact of freedom. The mind often cherishes false opinions concerning matters of fact, delusions are among the commonest mental phenomena. Schopenhauer particularly admitted that men felt at times they were free while he denied they were really free. A straight staff appears bent in a clear pool and cannot be made to appear

otherwise, despite the fact of its straightness and despite our knowledge of the fact. If we had never seen it out of the pool we should probably affirm it was crooked. So most people, judging by appearances, believe in freedom because they feel they are free. There is thus a possibility of general deception respecting this belief in freedom. This possibility is appreciated if we recall some hypnotic phenomena. A man may, though awake, under the influence post-hypnotic suggestion give away some of his property; he may then sign a statement saying he did it of his own free will and accord; spectators know otherwise. So Schopenhauer would say the world-will deceives us all in so far as we believe in our freedom. Besides we are to remember the hosts of people, especially in the Eastern countries, who believe that all the events of human life are predetermined.

Putting these and other possible observations together, we see why it is customary for modern psychology to reject the doctrine of freedom and to defend the doctrine of determinism. It is appropriate at this point to remark that psychology as a science seems rather deliberately to exclude freedom as a possibility because of the assumptions it has adopted as a science. It is as though psychology said, Our science can admit no freedom even though freedom be a fact This remark will be very significant in our later rebuttals.

7. The argument from sociology. The sociologists have rewritten the free-will question in their own way. They have taken it out of the region of the individual and put it in the region of the social. This is a most fruitful thing to do because man really lives and acts in society and not in isolation. Now in society the laws that control are those of imitation and suggestion. The members of a crowd are not freely deciding, they are following the leader. The leader himself is not freely deciding, he is fascinated by some idea in his mind, he has put deliberation behind. So a man's deeds are traceable to the deeds of others and to his own dominating ideas. So the science of the action of men in groups becomes possible

through asserting social determinism and denying individual freedom.

A peculiarly suggestive illustration of what appears to be freedom turning out to be determinism is afforded by the application of statistical methods of study in sociology. Supposed free-will acts are really capable of prediction in the mass. One decides to get married; he says he does so of his own free will and accord; many others do the same. But the statistician can predict in advance the approximate number of marriages that will take place next year. Was it not predetermined then in the nature of the social situations that so many marriages would occur? How otherwise account for the prediction? And if the prediction is possible, how then were the marriages due to free will? Viewed thus in the large, free-will acts appear subject to general laws. Indeed, without such legality, such predictability, how could society make its plans and assume responsibilities? So sociology as a science speaks for determinism.

8. The argument from ethics. The interests of ethics, of such matters as duty, obligation, conscience, reward, and blame, are peculiarly bound up with the doctrine of freedom in the eyes of many. Yet there is also an argument from ethics for determinism. It runs as follows: a man's character determines his acts, he is responsible, for the act is his own; he committed it because, being the man he is, he could not have done otherwise. If his act were an effect of free will, no one could count upon him, he would be an irresponsible agent. Just because he is bound by his character, he is dependable. If his acts are good, he is to be congratulated on his character, not praised overmuch; if his acts are bad, he is to be pitied for his character, not blamed overmuch. He is rewarded, not because he could have done otherwise, but as a tribute to the stability of his character and as a stimulus to continued right action. He is punished, again not because he need not have done wrong, but to help him do right next time. All our instruction, reproof, and correction of others

presupposes they may be determined, by such influences. Thus the whole outfit of ethical categories may be read in deterministic terms, and indeed are so read by many ethical thinkers and writers, beginning with Socrates who held that right ideas determine right conduct. Some practical teachers say, though believing in freedom for themselves, they must believe in determinism for their pupils. At any rate the theory of conduct, which ethics attempts, is not necessarily committed to the defense of freedom. The religion of Buddhism is deterministic and pessimistic, and atheistic, in the sense that it has no supreme God, yet Buddhism has an ethics, an ethics of discipline and renunciation. So ethics as a science, seeking the laws of human conduct, like psychology and sociology, often speaks for the deterministic interpretation of life.

It may seem to some readers that there is so little reasonable ground for remorse and any sense of sin on the deterministic basis that it may be well to include at this point the following words of Professor Creighton:

“We have next to consider in what way a determinist can interpret the feeling of remorse, and the consciousness of sin. It is urged with great force by the advocates of free will that, if we do not admit the possibility of doing otherwise, at least in crucial cases, these terms represent mere illusions. We may err, it is said, but we cannot sin, nor can we have any reason for remorse. I venture, however, to think that a real meaning and a sufficient justification can be given to these feelings without recognizing any such postulate. If the individual admits that the action in question has been consciously willed by him, and that nothing but his own character led to its adoption, and if now he has come to a better mind and recognizes that it is not in conformity with some ideal which is regarded as higher, and hence as obligatory, he has every possible motive for reproaching himself. The feeling of remorse is the immediate result of the perception of the discrepancy existing between the ideal and the actual.

The determinist, regarding his act as the expression of his character, and not of some unmotivated freak of willing, has the

strongest possible reasons for feeling remorse. It is when he fully realizes that the act is his own—that he is the man of such a character—that his feeling of remorse becomes most poignant, and he is ready to abhor himself and exclaim. 'Wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me!'"

9. The argument from theology. It will be enough to conclude the arguments for determinism with this one from theology, the most ambitious of all sciences, the science of God. Theology has historically transported the certainty of the observational sciences into the Speculative regions of the divine nature, it has asserted what it could not prove, it has been "dogmatic." Theology today, by finding God in human experience, not exclusively in the law of the Jews, nor the Church of the Catholics, nor the Bible of the Protestants, is asserting less and proving more, is becoming correspondingly vital. But most minds resent this transition, they want to know the mysteries, they consequently prefer the old doctrinal type of theology which fascinates the intellect through its systematic satisfaction of man's interest in the unsearchable things.

Now determinism is one of the many tenets of the old dogmatic theology, basing itself not on the deeds and teachings of Jesus but on the doctrines of Paul, repeated by Augustine, formulated by Aquinas, fastened upon a large portion of the reformation countries by Luther and Calvin, and fervently preached in America by Jonathan Edwards. This line of development in the Christian tradition, is analogous to the Eastern views of Brahmin, Buddhist, and the post-Christian Mohammedan. Religion in the East and West has satisfied many souls by sinking the individuality of man in the absoluteness of God; the Brahmin anticipates absorption in Brahm; the Buddhist hopes for personal annihilation; the Mohammedan can but do the will of Allah. Such religious satisfactions theology intellectualizes in the doctrine of determinism.

The argument from theology for determinism runs somewhat as follows: God is omniscient, He therefore knows what I am

going to do before I do it, there is therefore nothing for me to do except what He knows I am going to do, there is consequently but one reality, not two possibilities awaiting me in the future; therefore I am not free to do otherwise than I must do when the time comes. Thus the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God is held to exclude the freedom of man's choice. But to deny that God has foreknowledge would be derogatory to his dignity.

The doctrine of foreknowledge is closely associated with that of "predestination", as Paul, the great law-loving Jew of Tarsus, wrote to the law-loving Romans in terms of prevailing divine legality, "whom He did foreknow, them He did predestinate". The argument from predestination rests upon the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God. This theological doctrine is the counterpart of the political doctrine of absolutism, that all the national power is possessed by the ruler whose will alone is the people's law. Now if God is the absolute ruler of the universe, whose is all power, by whose decrees every event transpires, no man is free to do otherwise than as God wills. If man had any power for good or evil whatsoever of his own, by so much would the absolute sovereignty of God be abridged. But God is sovereign, therefore the will of man is in the bondage of necessity. Dugald Stewart is said to have observed, "There is a fallacy here somewhere but the devil himself can't find it."

The predestinationists in the past have not hesitated to be logically consistent in tracing all the evils as well as all the goods of past, present, and future to the divine decrees. I will not attempt to paint the picture in words of the temporal and eternal worlds of human bliss and woe explicable only in terms of the will of God; it is a picture from which modern life has almost entirely turned away; from which even Calvinistic theology is turning away, on the one hand admitting human freedom as a mystery, on the other hand appealing to men as voluntary agents, and not leaving them alone as God's automata.

Let these nine arguments then represent for us something of the strength of the deterministic armory. They may not convert

any libertarian reader, even though he may not be able to answer them all; they may strengthen any deterministic reader; at least I hope they help to make plain why so many of our fellow mortals are willing to eliminate individual will from their analysis of the forces that make men. No one of the arguments taken singly may convince, but all of them taken together have a certain cumulative effect that must give pause to easy believers in human freedom. After all, our beliefs are due more to our feelings and preferences than to our ideas; for this reason arguments do not so much convince opponents as confirm one's self. Even those philosophers who make reason the test of truth do not entirely escape the influence of their emotions. While recognizing the influence of feeling on belief, which will receive more attention in our later discussion of pragmatism, we now turn to what reason can say in refutation of these arguments.



## CHAPTER 5: REBUTTAL OF THESE ARGUMENTS FOR DETERMINISM

FOLLOWING our plan in discussing this question of determinism, let us next do what we can to rebut the foregoing arguments. Even if our feelings and preferences lead us in the direction of freedom, it is something to have our intellects support rather than condemn us. We will consider the arguments in the same order in which they were presented.

1a. The argument from physics. This argument rests upon an admitted hypothesis, viz., that of the conservation of physical energy. It is a good hypothesis, to be sure, but it is not known as yet to be a universal fact; especially is it not known to be a fact in the region of the mutual relations between mind and brain. One does not really disprove freedom by appealing to an hypothesis, especially if freedom is more obviously a fact than the hypothesis in question. Now if the true relation between mind and brain is that of interaction, as all dualists hold, then the sum total of physical energy in the world is somewhat diminished every time a stimulus becomes a sensation, and it is also somewhat increased every time an intention causes a motion of the body. If this were true, no energy indeed would be lost but the quantity of physical energy in the world would be subject to fluctuation.

One of the Oxford group of "personal idealists," who are valiant defenders of freedom all, argues plausibly "that the principle: of psychical initiative is in no way incompatible with the principle of the conservation of energy, properly understood." The proper understanding of the principle involves the recognition that "the equation of constancy is in fact a most unjustifiable extension *in indefinitum* of the well-known equation of equivalence" and that "the so-called principle of the constancy of energy has not even the hypothetical necessity of a regulative principle of physics."

But further, the argument involves an assumption, perhaps unwarranted in itself, that may take one of two forms. The first form is that all energy is physical in character, which is downright materialism; the second form is that, if there is any

other energy than physical, it does not affect the physical nexus, which is a simple begging of the question.

Now, positively, on this energy question another hypothesis is statable and indeed defensible. It is the hypothesis that all energy in the last analysis is psychical in character. Professor Ostwald, the distinguished chemist at Jena, reduces all forms of existence to energy, in his philosophy of life known as "Energetics." The next prime question is as to the nature of this energy. Now physical energy, such as light, heat, electricity, chemical affinity, etc., we know only at second hand, in terms of what it does, not in terms of what it is. But psychical energy we know at first hand, in terms of what it is, as well as second hand, in terms of what it does. My attention is psychical energy at first hand, my consequent movement is its objective manifestation. The only energy we know at first hand is psychical in character and this energy appears to be capable of effecting physical movements. It is easy to suppose that as some physical movements have psychical energy behind them, all physical movements may have the same. This is no proof but at least it is an hypothesis worthy of consideration. It is the hypothesis of all idealistic philosophy. It does not deny the existence of matter but affirms that the nature of matter is at bottom psychical. This hypothesis also appears, perhaps sometimes in crude, or even distorted, form, in all the new psychotherapeutic systems. On its basis energy may indeed be one, may even be constant, as physics demands, but it does not exclude the possibility of the individual as a center of conscious energy taking a share in his own directing. By substituting psychical for physical in the ordinary hypothesis of the conservation of energy, we save both physics and freedom.

2a. The argument from biology. The theory that heredity and environment alone explain all the acts of man, adopted bodily from biology, applied without scruple to man as to the lower animals, obviously begs the question without discussing it. The syllogism was, all animals are determined by heredity and environment, man is an animal, therefore man, etc. It is evident

that the major premise assumes in a universal form the very thing to be proved in a particular case. It is certainly to be admitted in the minor that man is an animal. But despite all the analogies between man and the lower animals, that identity between them is not established which would make the argument conclusive. It is not necessary to raise the most difficult question concerning the possible presence of choice among higher animals, such as horses, dogs, and anthropoid apes. In this connection too it should be remembered that biology today continually uses terms suggestive of will, such as "selection", "struggle for existence", etc. In fact, modern biological theory is couched in teleological terms, though indeed of the immanent type of teleology. J. M. Baldwin's psychophysical theory of evolution, especially his contribution of "organic selection", means distinctly that the individual animal helps to make himself as well as that he is partly made by other forces.

3a. The argument from physiology. The position that man is a conscious automaton really is in contradiction to one of the main principles in the theory of evolution, *viz.*, that the organs useful to the organism survive and those useless atrophy. If consciousness were really useless to the organism, it would have been eliminated long ago. But the fact is that the grade of consciousness has been constantly increasing as we ascend in the scale of beings. This means that consciousness is useful to the organism, that it is increasingly useful as the organisms develop. Consciousness has played a most important role in the evolution of the higher type of animals; it has justified its existence by its utility in the struggle for life, resulting in the elimination of the unfit and the survival of the fittest.

Now the particular part played by consciousness in the evolution of the higher forms is mainly this: to serve as the test of what is beneficial and what is detrimental to the organism. This is done by means of such mental states as pleasure, the unpleasant, and pain. There are some exceptions, but on the whole the pleasant things are beneficial and the painful things

harmful. Thus the animal by following his feelings seeks the pleasant things which help him to survive and avoids the unpleasant things that would destroy him. Such close followers of nature as Rousseau and Spencer find the sensations and feelings of man a sufficient guide in his eating and drinking. They may indeed become depraved and, when judgment is present, it must indeed superintend. It is the use of the knowledge that animals will follow their appetites by which men are enabled to prey upon them. Fish like worms and worms are good for fish; on the whole it is best for fish that they eat the worms they can get, despite the fact that a few worms have hooks in them.

A further point may be made against the physiological argument. This argument asserts that consciousness, though existent, is not a cause. But the sequence of bodily acts upon mental intentions indicate that the acts are effects of an antecedent condition of which the conscious intent was at least one element. Consciousness thus would at least be a contributing cause to physical action. With this verdict consciousness itself by introspection would agree. To this introspective evidence, however, we shall return later. The idea that consciousness is a cause does not commit us necessarily to the doctrine of dualistic interaction; it may commit us only to that of spiritual monism, which asserts that consciousness is a cause, the only ultimate cause, and the sole principle of reality.

4a. The law of causation. The law that every effect has its cause is indeed a law and is without an exception. We cannot think otherwise. But to assume, as the rest of the argument does, that all causes are physical, patently begs the very question at issue. And to assert without question that so-called physical acts and physical causes are really nothing but physical shows a materialistic lack of philosophical feeling. Effects are indeed generally like their causes but both causes and effects may be psychical, or, if the effects are physical as the dualists hold, then the psychical may be a cause as held by the interactionists. On either basis, the law of causation does

not exclude the possibility of the psychical being a cause, and our preceding paragraph indicated that the psychical was a cause. Only on the basis of a materialistic philosophy does the law of causation preclude the efficacy of mind, by denying the existence of mind, but materialism is hard to defend philosophically in these days of intellectual and mental triumphs.

5a. Science's philosophy of nature. This to me is the strongest argument against freedom of the will; it has probably swayed the intellects of modern scientists in the direction of determinism more than any other argument; but its refutation is as pretty and as complete as any impartial mind could wish. Science's philosophy of nature which excludes the mind as a cause is itself an effect of mind. The assertion that the universe, whole and part, is governed by the action of mechanical law is itself a mental judgment an effect of mind as cause. Mechanism itself is a construction of the human mind descriptive and explanatory of nature's processes. Mechanism is the effect of man's purpose to understand nature and of his intellect in formulating her processes. So-called "natural laws" are human formulations, they fairly describe, but they do not exhaust, nature. The mechanical philosophy exists for a purpose, serves an end, *viz.*, to enable man to adjust himself to, and partly to control, the natural processes. Thus, after all, mechanism is an effect of which the scientific mind is the cause. It is not only pitiable, it is superficial, for science to deny the primacy of mind in the interest of mechanism. The true view of the real nature of the universe in accord with this criticism will be suggested—it cannot be demonstrated—in our positive argument presently.

But at this point, lest it seem we have refuted one philosophy by the aid of another, let me remark that the facts of science themselves testify against science's philosophy of nature. This philosophy asserts that the universe is a mechanism. Now a machine is an instrument for the transformation of energy; and it transforms energy by destroying compounds: it never

transforms energy by building up compounds. The steam engine is a typical machine, transforming the potential energy in the complex compounds in coal into heat. No machine known to man can build the compounds it destroys. But the living things in nature do this very thing. The plants, by processes known to botany, build food for man out of simple inorganic binary compounds like water, carbon dioxide, and ammonia; the animal body, by processes known to physiology, builds complex fats out of simple starches. Real machines are destructive: the live things of nature are constructive; it is patently calling things by the wrong name to say plants and animals are nothing but machines. This is no effort to reintroduce a discarded vitalism into scientific methods; it is a protest against using a name to conjure away the deep things of the spirit. Let science for purposes of its own continue to work on the hypothesis that chemistry and physics provide the only explanatory methods; but let it recognize the stupendous fact that these methods have not yet *explained*.

As one biologist, a special student of living machines, expresses it: "The origin of living matter is shrouded in as great obscurity as ever. . . . We are apparently as far from the real goal of a natural explanation of life as we were before the discovery of protoplasm. . . . Chemical forces and mechanical forces have been industriously investigated, but neither appear adequate to the manufacture of machines. They produce only chemical compounds and worlds with their mountains and seas. The construction of artificial machines has demanded intelligence. But here is a natural machine—the organism. It is the only machine produced by natural methods, so far as we know; and we have therefore next asked whether there are, in nature, simple forces competent to build machines such as living animals and plants?" The researches of Loeb and Bataillon have repeatedly startled the world. Starting with the unfertilized ova of a sea-urchin, Loeb, by the use of a solution of magnesium and sea water, has stimulated these eggs mechanically so that they began to develop as though they had been fertilized. And Bataillon, still more remarkably, beginning

with the eggs of a frog, one of the vertebrates, by the use of an electric needle, has stimulated their development into tadpoles. This is indeed wonderful, but it is not "making life", as it has been sensationally heralded—it is only stimulating preexisting life. When the biologists produce the ova with which they begin, it will be still more remarkable, and then it will be time to talk about "making life". And in that day, if it ever comes, we shall probably recognize that the chemical elements, now supposed to be dead, out of which the ova were produced, were themselves alive all the while and we knew it not.

This is no attempt to find God by faith in the unexplored remainder of man's researches, permitting thereby the implication that God recedes before the advances of scientific knowledge. God is as truly implied in what we think we know as in what we do not know. He is the God of light as well as of darkness, of knowledge as well as of ignorance. All human knowledge is relative, implying a knowledge that is absolute. As John Burroughs says: "As a scientist, one can not admit anything mystical or transcendental in nature; while, on the other hand, the final explanation of the least fact is beyond us. We know certain things about chemical affinity, for instance; but what makes chemical affinity?" Thus, even if, by an imaginative leap into the far future of scientific research, we eliminate all unexplored remainders, still these chemical and mechanical explanations are but themselves the machinations of the human intelligence for purposes of its own. The loudest witness to teleology is mechanism understood.

I would not limit the argument to specific organisms in nature like plants and animals which are more than machines but I would carry it to the whole of nature itself. Plants and animals are not simple machines, though in some of their processes, like respiration, circulation, digestion, they appear so, still they are themselves the products of nature. Now we have seen that no machine can build the complex compound it can destroy; still less can one machine build another; still less can a machine build what is superior to a machine. But the universe has built plants and animals; the universe therefore is

no machine. What the universe can be we are to suggest later; one thing it cannot be is a simple machine for the transformation downwards of potential energy, for the universe has stored up this potential energy, has built up the compounds holding it, has produced the living things that construct as well as destroy, is itself the fertile mother of all living.

6a. The argument from psychology. The working hypothesis of psychology, asserting a correspondence between mental and physical states, is a method of investigation, it is purposely vague, it does not purport to be a philosophical principle, it is not intended to be used to prove or disprove freedom of the will. All psychologists work on the basis of this hypothesis, whether they be idealists or materialists, libertarians or determinists. People who confuse the tool with which they work with the field in which they work may suppose that "no psychosis without neurosis" means determinism. To others it is evident this phrase may be accepted alike by those who consider the psychosis the cause and the neurosis the effect, the idealists; by those who consider the neurosis the cause and the psychosis the effect, the materialists; by those who hold both, the dualists; by those who deny both but hold to the underlying identity of psychosis and neurosis, the agnostic monists; and by those who hold psychosis and neurosis to be parallel to each other without ever meeting in any causal relation, the psychophysical parallelists; as well as by the physiological psychologists who as a matter of scientific method explain the mind by the brain without intending thereby to disclose their philosophy.

It should also be borne in mind that there are other kinds of psychology which do not utilize this working hypothesis, for example, the older introspective rational philosophy of mind, the new social psychology, and the new psychology of selves (cf. the psychological writings of M. W. Calkins), as well as the proposed new "psychology of first causes" (cf. the Gibson paper cited above).

It is true that their method leads most physiological



psychologists into determinism, but this is not necessary. One may be a determinist in psychology as a matter of method and an idealist in philosophy, as Professor Munsterberg. Or one may adopt this hypothesis and yet not hold to it so rigidly as to explain all mental states by the brain, preferring in some instances to explain the brain's action by the mental state, as Professor James, who writes: "Probability and circumstantial evidence thus run dead against the theory that our actions are *purely* mechanical in their causation. From the point of view of descriptive psychology (even though we be bound to assume, as on page 6, that all our feelings have brain processes for their condition of existence, and can be remotely traced in every instance to currents coming from the outer world) we have no clear reason to doubt that the feelings may react so as to further or to dampen the processes to which they are due. I shall therefore not hesitate in the course of this book to use the language of common sense. I shall talk as if consciousness kept actively pressing the nerve-centers in the direction of its own ends, and was no mere impotent and paralytic spectator of life's game." This may be condemned as unscientific untruth but it must be appraised as the refusal of a man to be bound by his intellectual implements.

It is certainly to be admitted that we do not know how consciousness can change a brain-state, nor how a brain-state can change consciousness. But ignorance is no basis for an argument. Least of all is ignorance of the *how* to be used to deny the fact *that*. We may long remain in ignorance of the real relation of mind and brain, and we probably shall, but meanwhile all the time the mind as a matter of fact may be influencing the brain. People who think become aware of a sensation of brain-fatigue; the thinking as a fact may cause the fatigue; yet as a fact we may remain ignorant as to the *how* of the process. No man can justifiably deny freedom on the ground that we are ignorant of how the mind can affect the body. Tennyson, the poet of science, may after all be correct in considering "the main miracle" to be "that thou art thou, with power on thine own act and on the world". This is not to

reinstate miracle as a violation of natural law but to regard natural law as expressive of inner freedom.

So concerning the mental law that the strongest motive determines the will. This seems to exclude freedom but it does so only when we omit to ask, what determines the strongest motive? By attending, to weak motives we make them strong. Even if we admit that at the moment of action we follow the strongest motive, still we must remark that this motive may have been inherently the weakest at the beginning of deliberation. Thus, by the will to attend, strong motives through neglect become weak and weak motives through concentration become strong.

The determinist may properly inquire, But what is the cause of the attention? This he will want to find in the underlying brain- state. But the libertarian will find the cause of the attention in some purpose, perhaps the purpose to do the right, which purpose has indeed a corresponding brain-state, but the significant thing here is the purpose, not the brain-state. It is true that "significance" is an ethical, not a scientific category. Its use here shows that science, not even the science of psychology, can have the last word on the free-will question. Purposes are more truly forward-looking than backward-looking, their causes are final, not efficient. All science, psychology included, has, "significance" only in terms of the purpose of man to comprehend himself and his world. The brain was made for thought, not thought for the brain. The brain may indeed be, in part at least, the efficient cause of attention, but its final cause cannot be found short of intention.

7a. The argument from sociology. It is indeed to be allowed that in crowds little or no free will is evidenced. The conditions hardly admit of deliberation and choice. The leader is under the influence of a suggestive idea and the followers are under the influence of the leader. The feelings, not the judgment, rule. And it is men in organized masses that sociology particularly studies. But for the purpose of this discussion it is to be remembered that men sometimes also deliberate and choose in

private apart from the hindering and propelling influences of the crowd. Indeed our greatest men decide in secret meditation, perhaps in temptation, what their open conduct shall be. This is where freedom is to be found, and such decisions are bulwarks of opposition to the fierce onslaught of crowd influences. Occasionally a man appears to oppose the crowd actuated by an unlawful purpose.

As to the predictions made by sociology concerning marriages, etc., two things are to be borne in mind. First such predictions do not have the astronomical certainty they should have if social determinism were true; they are at best inexact. In this respect they are like all predictions concerning animals, you never can be sure in advance what an animal will do. The predictions are certainly as exact as the nature of the material permits us to expect.

But, second, I want to protest against the idea that freedom shows itself only by doing the unexpected, freedom may also do the expected. We expect a good man to do what he ought to do; when he does so we cannot deny him freedom. We expect a bad man to do what he ought not to do; if he does so, we cannot deny him freedom. The good man sometimes does wrong, the bad man sometimes does right; such unexpected action is no more a proof of freedom than the expected action, though it is more striking. In both types of action we may sometimes have freedom and sometimes determinism. So with the predictions. Even if they became more exact than they are, they would not disprove freedom, they would only prove that men were doing what they were expected to do. Under like conditions we may expect like choices from like men. There may be self-consistent regularity in freedom as well as in determinism. In fact, many suggestions already met in our preceding discussion have intimated that the regularity in the action of the free spirit at the heart of nature, society, and the individual is responsible for our success in forming mechanical philosophies of nature, society, and man.

8a. The argument from ethics. Does a man's character

determine his acts? Sometimes it certainly does; and further, when the character is nearly fixed it almost always does. Our friends, wives, husbands, fathers, mothers whom we know well, rarely surprise us in their acts; their conduct is in keeping with what we know their character to be. But two restrictions are to be placed upon the outright affirmation that the character determines the acts. The first is, in the case of children the acts determine the character; these acts may have many origins, one of which, especially in adolescence, is free choice.

The other restriction is, no character is finally fixed at any point in time. So acts out of keeping are indeed sometimes performed. The bank cashier, faithful through long years, becomes an absconding thief. The habitual drunkard becomes sober. The instances are not common, but they are common enough to indicate a remnant of freedom uncovered by the layer of rigid character. Besides, it is again to be noted that a person with character well matured may continually be choosing, perhaps in temptation, to maintain his reputation and be consistent with himself.

9a. The argument from theology. Those were very subtle metaphysical arguments concerning "fate, foreknowledge, and free will". It does seem hard to admit foreknowledge and divine sovereignty on the one hand and not affirm determinism on the other. I have no still subtler metaphysical presentations with which to offset them, but two views of others may be presented, and then a few obvious reflections. Martineau suggests that God does indeed know all knowable things, but that what a free-will agent is going to choose is not one of the knowable things; thus foreknowledge is limited by free will. This may or may not seem satisfactory to the reader. Professor James suggests that, like an expert chess-player, God knows all the possibilities from which one may choose but not the one actuality; so that while God does not know what particular thing a free-will agent will do, he can never be surprised. Here again foreknowledge is limited by free will but not in a disturbing way.

The obvious thing to observe here would seem to be that we are talking about concepts, the concepts of foreknowledge and free will. By determinists they are held to exclude each other; likewise by libertarians, as Martineau and James show. But if we perfect our concept of foreknowledge, there is no irreconcilable conflict between it and free will; that is to say, foreknowledge may be so perfect that God knows what I will freely do, what I am freely doing. Why not? If foreknowledge is not the mechanical prediction of the astronomer but the viewing of the content of future time as present by a Divine Mind, why may not such knowledge be co-existent with freedom? When a father, perhaps unseen by the son, sees the acts of the son, knows them to be what they are, is the son thereby not free in his acts? The knowledge is the father's, the act is the son's. So God's perfect knowledge may really embrace what a free-will agent will choose to do, without thereby affecting the inherent freedom of the act; it is not God's knowledge causing the action.

Since writing the above I came across the following pertinent passage in Berkeley: "To me, certain and necessary seem very different; there being nothing in the former notion that implies restraint, nor consequently which may not consist with a man's being accountable for his actions. If it is foreseen that such an action shall be done, may it not also be foreseen that it shall be an effect of human choice and liberty?"

The other difficulty concerning the mutual exclusiveness of the concepts of Divine Sovereignty and human freedom may likewise be resolved. On the basis of the political analogy of absolute despots and their abject subjects, the concepts are indeed exclusive, for the subject has no will of his own. Likewise on the basis of a dualistic philosophy separating between God and man, no reconciliation of these concepts is possible. It has been proposed that we consider that God limited his power by the freedom he bestowed upon man, as a rich man might give some money to his child to be his very own. The huge store of the rich man is diminished by as much as he gives. This proposed reconciliation on the dualistic basis

surrenders the concept of God's absoluteness to keep the concept of man's freedom. But we fare better on a basis of spiritual monism, asserting the identity of the good will of man as far as it goes with the will of God. Man is part of the whole; he may follow the will of the whole, which is the true use of freedom; or, he may reject in his own case the will of the whole, which is the abuse of freedom. In either case there is freedom, in either case there is no abridgment of the divine power; in the one case a part of the divine power is cooperating with the whole, in the other case it is refusing to cooperate. The real problem here is the nature of God in view of the sin of man, but that is another and very long story, and we do not have to follow it now in order to see that on the basis of idealism man can work out his own salvation and God still be working in him. It is important only to observe that the inevitable penalty for sin is as real a witness to the Divine Presence as the sure reward of righteousness.

In accord with these views based on the unity and spirituality of experience, the term "predestination" loses all its external, mechanical, and forbidding aspects. One's heredity predetermines his capacity, but he can help predetermine the capacity of his offspring. One's environment determines his opportunity, but he can, to a degree at least, select his environment. Within this limiting system he works out his destiny; within this system of unitary spiritual experience he is predestined to become what he wills to become. Some circumstances are beyond his control, others are not. In formal language, God predestines a man within certain inherited and envioning limits to become what he chooses to become.

Thus we have rehearsed the arguments for determinism and the possible refutations of those arguments. It is not claimed that the refutation point by point is as strong as the main arguments for determinism, but it is left for the reader to say whether the balance of probability in this speculative question does not lie on the side of the negative. This balance of probability I hope to make preponderant as we turn next to the positive arguments for freedom.

## **CHAPTER 6: THE ARGUMENTS FOR FREE WILL**

THE positive arguments for freedom have in part been brought forward already by implication in the attempted refutation of determinism and in part remain to be presented. In the case of the former group of arguments it will be necessary at this point only to state them without much amplification. The new arguments will require as careful an exposition as we can give them. All the arguments for freedom may be stated in the form of answers to the question: Why be a libertarian? In all there will be twelve answers to this question, four of them drawn briefly from the preceding pages, and the others being newly presented, with their difficulties suggested at the same time.

1. The argument from history. In our second chapter we thought we saw that the course of human history revealed a growing recognition, both theoretical and practical, of freedom as a fact and ideal of life. It is still true that perhaps half the theory and more than half the practice of the world are on the side of determinism. But once there was little theory and less practice on the side of freedom and now there is really a great deal of both. This indicates that the historic tendency still working itself out is in the direction of freedom. And this means that freedom is the truth for which so much determinism has been preparing the way.

There are three ways in which this argument might be weakened. One is to show that Chapter 2 does not on the whole correctly record the course of history; another is, to refuse to attach any significance to what history, admitting it has been correctly presented in the main, does reveal as to the truth of our question; and still another is to hold that the history has been a lapse from the truth instead of its unfolding. On the first point it should be remarked how easy it is for every philosopher, of whatever opinion, to make history form the premises to his own conclusion. On the other two views it may be remarked they form, if adopted, another illustration of James's famous "Dilemma of Determinism", viz., either a subjectivistic or a pessimistic reading of history, each of which

is unwelcome. Upon these ramifications of the argument we cannot further dwell.

2. The argument from the place of mind in evolution. All determinism denies that the mind of the organism is a first cause. But biological philosophy today is increasingly recognizing the role played by mind in the evolutionary process. This is in accord with the primal insight of Anaxagoras that mind moves all, with the views of Darwin on the influence of "sexual selection", and with the newer views of Baldwin and others on "organic selection". Furthermore, it is in accord with the fundamental biological principles that the useful variations are preserved and the useless are eliminated. Through the preservation and even marvelous expansion of mentality in the higher orders of life, mind proves itself a useful variation, not an "epiphenomenon". Now deliberation and choice appear as the last variation in mental development, in both phylogeny and ontogeny. Choice appears to be the most complete agency of adjustment possible between the individual and his environment. To deny this real significance to choice and to hold that man molds his fate no more than an amoeba is to reduce the climax of progress to an unendurable dead level, is to take meaning out of the widening place that mind has been making for itself in organic evolution.

The determinist may reply that the role of mind in evolution has been that of a secondary cause only, not a first cause. This objection penetrates to the very depths of one's philosophy and will receive consideration in argument four below.

3. The argument from causation. Our purpose here is to show that mind is a cause, and this not by a difficult epistemological argument, though such is available and convincing, but by the first two experimental methods for determining causal relation as described by John Stuart Mill. Without repeating his long formulations, the substance of "the method of agreement" is that phenomena which repeatedly go together belong together causally. As a check upon this easily



misleading principle, we have the “method of difference”, the substance of which is that phenomena which disappear together under experimentation belong together causally. By the method of agreement one is led to suppose, for example, that the air may be the cause of the transmission of the stimuli from a bell causing sound sensations. By the method of difference the air is exhausted from a jar containing a bell which now no longer resounds when struck, and the causal relation between air and sound transmission is established. In the same way, by the method of agreement, we suppose that our mind, in cases of so-called deliberate acts, is causally related to the movement of the body. By the method of difference it is observed that the so-called, deliberate act, whether an act of philanthropy or a theft, does not take place when the mind has not willed it. Therefore the causal relation between mind and certain bodily acts is established. If an act of philanthropy or theft took place under post-hypnotic suggestion, such acts are not deliberate acts, and the person so committing them is not their sole cause. In sum, deliberate choice is “a sole invariable antecedent”, to use the phrase of Jevons, of certain acts when they occur, and is absent when they do not occur. A fair application of these experimental methods for determining causal relations to the mental as well as to the physical antecedents of bodily action will show that the mental states are as truly related causally to the body as are the preceding bodily states.

The determinists may reply that we do not understand how the mind helps to move the body, which is true enough, or he may quarrel with Mill’s formulations, or he may seek refuge in the obscurity of our notion of cause.

A more serious objection is that the argument shows the mind is a cause but not a free cause. What is the cause of the mind as a cause? it may be asked. The answer to this question is twofold; first, it shows confused thinking, involving the infinite regress. Second, the law of causation is that every effect has a cause, not that every cause has a cause. If the mind is indeed itself a cause, it is not merely an effect it is therefore

not wholly determined but at least partially free. This answer involves both the mind's sense of its own freedom and also its relationship to God, which matters must be considered in their proper place below. Meanwhile it may help us to remember that the mind is the true cause even of those theories that deny its own efficiency, and that the mind is moved by final as well as by efficient causes.

4. The energy of attention. To recur to an earlier observation again, after all, the only energy we know at first hand is energy of attention. Looking outwardly, we see the effects of energy; looking inwardly, we see the sources of energy. Physical movement shows us what energy does; attention shows us what energy, in this instance at least, is. Now the energy of attention is conscious. This means that each person is a center of conscious force, and as such is capable of self-direction. The soul in its decisions directs the body as the engineer the engine; or better,—since the tracks are beneath the engine to guide it,—as the driver the horse; or better,—since the roads are before the horse to guide him,—as the pilot his vessel, or as the aviator his airship.

We know these things well enough, and should probably say them oftener if our loyalty to science and our sense of truth did not unfortunately and unnecessarily seem to be in conflict with each other. But the view already suggested that man's purpose explains science better than science explains man's purpose permits us both to assert freedom in the interest of truth and to assert determinism as a part of the scientific outfit in understanding the world mechanically. Determinism is not true, it is a useful scientific fiction.

Baldwin has an enlightening and significant paragraph on "attention as mental energy", in the course of which he says, "This fact . . . leads us to see in attention the only exhibition of mental *energy* as distinguished from mental *states*: and in the consciousness of this abiding energy we find the ground of mental *unity* and *personality*,"

5. The evidence of introspection. There is a consciousness of freedom. This sense of freedom is very generally felt, even by determinists though some determinists say they have no such sense. It is true that respecting some things already done we all feel their inevitableness, this feeling is traceable to the naturalness of their happening; *e. g.*, the inevitableness of the fall of Rome given the antecedent conditions of the lack of a citizen- soldiery, the decay of morality, the slaughter in wars of Rome's strong men, the onslaught of the barbarians, etc. But it is equally true that respecting very many deeds of our own lives we feel they need not have been done, that they might not have been done, that we ourselves tipped the scales of decision in one direction rather than in the other. "It might have been" are the sad words; "it couldn't have been" are words of resignation, but in many instances our spirits rebel at using them. Caesar's crossing the Rubicon was one of those acts of individual decision that need not have been; it is indeed explicable in terms of his character and his ambition but who can deny that he might have controlled himself? Take an instance nearer home: can you forgive yourself for the petulant word that escaped you yesterday on the ground that you couldn't have helped it? Do you do so? On the basis of determinism one could bewail his fate, with Buddhists and the Greek tragic characters, but he could not repent of his sin. It is interesting to note that the Orientals who accept fatalism, though meditative, are not introspective; they have given us no introspective psychology; but the Western people who accept freedom, though very busy and active, are yet introspective; they find freedom by introspecting. It is also interesting that determinism in the West, in the case of Calvin, was associated with the doctrine of resistance to oppressive sovereigns; while denying freedom in form, Calvinism has always meant political freedom in fact.

Despite this sense of freedom, determinists nevertheless say, as we saw, that this sense itself is a delusion, that the view of freedom is a false opinion about a matter of fact. But it is most unlikely that there should be a general delusion on this point

with all the facts of consciousness so open to introspection. The sense of freedom is there, those who deny freedom nevertheless feel free. If men were not free, we should expect the feeling and the fact in most instances to correspond. It is most unlikely that in the majority of instances, where introspection is at the best, the fact and the feeling should be at variance. In most instances, if we feel sick, we are sick; if we feel well, we are well; if we feel cold, we are cold, and so on; so, if we feel free, we are free. No purpose would be served in the economy of nature by general delusion. Nature is not a magician hypnotizing us into the belief in our freedom when we are really fated; we are not all crazy, nor all deluded; we take our freedom in the same good faith in which we take the other sure deliverances of our consciousness corrected by social contact. What is a fact for the rational social individual consciousness is a fact, and if, as we suppose, consciousness be the ultimate reality, nothing else is a fact. Consciousness is the final bar of judgment.

At this point let me refer to the self-contradiction involved in that determinism which, like Schopenhauer's, admits the sense of freedom but denies the fact of freedom. The contradiction is in consciousness trusting itself in distrusting itself. Consciousness finds the sense of freedom in itself; this sense it distrusts; this distrust it trusts. It is of course praiseworthy to be critical in introspection, to revise our introspections; it is self-contradictory to go further and deny that the facts of consciousness mean what they say, for the denial itself is also one of those facts of consciousness and we become entangled in an infinite regress of denials. Once again, what is a fact for the universal introspective human consciousness is a fact for man, he has no other and no higher tribunal.

6. The argument from man's responsibility. This argument is very closely connected with that from introspection. Man feels himself, to be a responsible person. This responsibility means to him that, his decisions are of his own making, that they may be any one of several, that he cannot shirk the duty of

deliberating and choosing, that the outcome depends on his choice in part, that he himself is a center of causality. In accord with this sense of responsibility, his conscience approves him when he has decided in accord with it, and it condemns him when he has sacrificed the higher to the lower. Not that he is justified in taking all the praise or all the blame to himself, for his decisions are themselves but centers of energy in a vast system. In the last analysis responsibility rests both with the system and with the man. But no true man will throw all the responsibility off himself onto the system, with Omar Khayyam:

**"O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin  
Beset the Road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round  
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!"**

7. The sense of effort. Some of our decisions are easily reached, others with difficulty. Some again are executed with ease, others with effort. The effortful type of reaching and executing a decision shows the man himself is doing something; he is rowing, not drifting. At any moment he might give up the struggle and float with the tides of circumstance, but with effort he battles on while his strength lasts. He does his best; it would have been so easy to have done less; the most of us are doing less all the time. Thus effort signifies self-direction.

"Signifies" again is an ethical, not scientific, category. The physiological psychologists with a pleasant sense of triumph can "explain" all sense of effort by reference to the muscular contraction of the body, the stopped breathing, the clenched fist, the set teeth, the tense expression, etc., and it is right and proper to do so for purpose of their own. Only let them note that they are doing so for a purpose, and that thus "purpose" after all is the significant thing below science. No one exhausts the meaning of the sense of effort by referring it to its physiological companions, any more than you exhaust Egyptian thought by reference to their system of hieroglyphs. It is one thing to attend to an ideal under difficulties, it is another thing to stiffen one's upper lip; yet the two things may be connected

as the psychical and the physical aspects of a single occurrence.

8. The argument from satisfaction and remorse. The emotions of man accompany his ideas and his deeds. If the ideas and deeds are right, the emotion of satisfaction is felt; if the ideas and deeds are wrong, the sense of self-condemnation and remorse is felt. The right satisfies us because, it is preservative, the wrong dissatisfies us because it is destructive. The right action which we are compelled to do loses its consequent sense of satisfaction and the wrong action forced upon us arouses not self-condemnation but indignation and resentment. Thus children who do right only under external command from a powerful agent do not feel the attractiveness of the right, and those who after good training, are forced into wrong doing indignantly resent it. The satisfaction we feel in doing right is not naturally associated with the deterministic idea that it was not our doing after all but only the world-will using us, and the remorse we feel at having done wrong is not naturally associated with the deterministic idea that the hated thing we were fated to perform. If really we play the determined parts of puppets in the inevitable course of things, not satisfaction and remorse but humiliation and despair would be the proper emotions. Indeed these are the very emotions that a deterministic theology sought to arouse, lest man should be proud before God, lest the glory of God for man's salvation be shared with man. So the quotation from Professor Creighton above (page 94) to some readers describes a situation full of despair rather than remorse, in that the wrong-doer fatefully misses his ideal like Tantalus misses the refreshing cup from which he would fain drink. Add a degree of freedom to the situation and the wrong-doer can indeed reproach himself because the deed need not have been committed and can also hope to redeem himself in time to come. To be created a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor allows no self-satisfaction to the one nor self-condemnation to the other. There might logically be self-

gratulation and thanksgiving on the one hand and self-commiseration and cursings on the other. The necessitated sinner can only curse his fate and die.

The determinist may logically reply to this objection that the emotions we have are also determined for us whether they are appropriate to their ideas and acts or not, and as such we shall go on having them.

9. The argument from praise and blame. The preceding argument applies to one's attitude toward himself; this argument applies to the attitude of others toward him or of himself toward others. This is the social argument for freedom. When children or adults do right under temptation, choosing present pain to insure future good or denying themselves a present pleasure for the sake of a greater good, we admire the act we praise the person, we feel merit and desert are present, we even in some instances add an artificial reward as the token of our appreciation. When, on the other hand, child or man chooses a present indulgence rather than a future good, we condemn the act and blame the person, we feel demerit to be present, and even at times punishment is inflicted upon those for whom we are responsible under the idea that law has been willfully disobeyed. Thus social praise and blame presuppose freedom on the part of the doer of the right or wrong deed.

Were the same deeds determined for the doers instead of being products of freedom, the appropriate emotions would be congratulation on good fortune or pity for bad fortune. Unquestionably there are instances where the emotions of congratulation and pity are more appropriate than those of praise and censure, but the very issue is whether they are the only appropriate ones in all cases.

The determinist may reply that social praise and blame do indeed presuppose that society regards its members as free in some of their acts but this does not prove that they are so. Besides he may point out the present tendency to regard morality as health and criminality as a disease, requiring from us less praise on the one hand and more pity on the other.

10. Experimental proofs suggested. These are two. The first is, the impossibility of your telling me in advance which of two alternatives I will do. Tell me which hand, left or right, of the two open ones I will close. I will undertake to upset your prediction any number of times in succession. What does this mean? The result is too regular for chance, as in the case of the flipping of a coin. It is not determinism, for the circumstances remain exactly the same, except for your word, which is trying to determine the outcome without avail. The only other factor, which is the true explanation of the situation, is my will to do the opposite of what you say. If you retort, this is determinism by "contrary suggestion", I reply, then I will do as you say a few times in the series to disprove your position. In short, impartial experimenters along this line will conclude that the consciousness of the subject is a self-determining agent in the face of a known situation, which is freedom.

Another case. I myself in simple cases can say in advance what I will do and tell you so, *e.g.*, that the right hand will be closed once and the left thrice, and this repeated seven times. It is absurd that these acts were predetermined; I determine myself here for the purpose of convincing you of my freedom. It is also absurd to say the present circumstances determine my selection of what to do, unless indeed you mean that man is one of his own circumstances, which is true, and which again is freedom. This experiment shows I can successfully predict in this case what I will do; this is because I can do what I will to do, within limits. If blind circumstances over which I had no control determined my action, I could not successfully say what I would do. In this connection the argument of Reid (page 55) maybe recalled.

In sum, your failure in determining me, despite your effort to be a determining circumstance in my choice, and my success in doing what I choose to do look more like freedom than determinism.

This would be proof final and absolute but for one thing, and this thing has hitherto kept the question from settlement. The



acts of will occur in time and time once passed is irrevocable. It is never possible to go back and actually do differently in the same circumstances, which would settle the controversy. But while this inability forbids final proof of freedom it also forbids final proof of determinism, which would consist in always doing the same despite effort to do differently when the stream of time rolled backward. We are left therefore still with the balancing of probabilities, which I have tried to show on the whole to be favorable to freedom.

11. The argument from life as a challenge. It is admitted at the outset that the man to whom life does not appeal as a challenge will be unaffected by this argument. To the determinist life is not a challenge, it is "the dull rattling, off of a chain forged innumerable ages ago", as James has it. That is, it would be that to a free willist; to the determinist himself life is the stage upon which he plays his assigned part. In our moments of fatigue or of lost vision we all tend to lapse into the deterministic attitude, and to regard ourselves as carried along by the combined currents of native inheritance, environing influence, and acquired habit. Much of our lives we live indeed as the conscious automata determinism would have us believe we are. But in our better moments of vigor and vision we see life otherwise. Then life and all it brings us of varied experiences is but the material from which by effort and choice we are to fashion ourselves and our world aright. In such moments life appears to us as the earnest serious process of self-realization by means of self-activity for the, sake of a larger self-hood and a better social service. In such moments we feel convinced that this is what life truly is. Then we say with Sallust, "Every man is the architect of his own fortune", to some degree at least, yes, and of his fellows' also. This is life as a challenge. "And how am I straightened till it be accomplished!" says the earnest soul. Such views are our best, and who will say they are not also our truest? But they cannot be made without distortion to fit into the deterministic scheme of things.

12. The argument from religion. This argument is based upon the assumption of the reality of religion as a relation between a Divine Personality and human personalities. It is admitted at the outset that the argument will make no appeal to those who have no experience of such a relation. It is also admitted that to a religious-minded determinist of the Edwards type, the argument will doubtless have in it an unwelcome element of presumption. The argument can be summed up in five statements, *viz.*, (1) God would be less honored in creating human machines than in expressing himself in human personalities; (2) the self-consciousness of man is witness that he is no machine, for no machine thinks itself; (3) "the image of God", which man must bear as the expression of his personality, must include some trace of the divine freedom; (4) God would not be truly worshipped by love and service not freely rendered but predetermined. As Milton makes God say of created men:

**"Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love."**

And (5) the problem of moral evil in the world is somewhat easier on a libertarian than on a deterministic basis, though difficult enough on any basis. It is hardly necessary to amplify these statements. The greater religious souls of the race have felt themselves not determined creatures of an autocratic sovereign but free sons of a Heavenly Father. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The doctrine of freedom makes man before God not a servant but a friend, not a subject but a son, a member not of a kingdom but of a family.

By way of brief summary for the case of freedom at this point it may be said that freedom is the growing tendency in the history of human thought and practice, that modern biological science is gradually coming to reckon with mind as a cause in evolution, that mind can be demonstrated to be a cause by Mill's experimental methods, that voluntary attention is known

to be a source of energy, that the sense of freedom and of responsibility and of effort which man has indicates human freedom, that the emotions of satisfaction, remorse, praise, and blame presuppose freedom for their existence, that certain simple experiments tend to convince us of our freedom, that life as a challenge postulates it and that religion as a reality in certain worthiest souls, notably Jesus has experienced and practiced the relation of freedom between man and God.

At this point our argument in so far as it rests upon reasons is closed. But a prominent metaphysician who believes in reason, Mr. Bradley, says that "metaphysics is the giving of bad reasons for what we believe on instinct." If this statement can be conceived as true in the case of metaphysicians themselves who traffic in reasons, how much more is it true of the multitude! That is a remarkably pragmatic statement to come from an absolute idealist. In line with this suggestion our argument, to complete itself really, must avowedly give the feelings and the instincts an opportunity to accept or reject determinism. There is no better way to do this than to turn to pragmatism.

## CHAPTER 7: PRAGMATISM AND FREEDOM

"HUMANISM must establish the reality of freedom", says F. C. S. Schiller, the English representative of pragmatism. And, as a matter of fact, pragmatists are usually free willists, though there is nothing in pragmatism as a system to require them to be. In fact, pragmatism is not yet a system of philosophy at all, but, as James calls it, "a new name for some old ways of thinking". And these are not so much ways of thinking as ways of letting thinking follow our feelings and instincts. In pragmatism, "the wish is father to the thought".

The main principle of pragmatism is, the theories that work are true. This is very different from saying, true theories work. In the former case, practicality constitutes the, very nature of truth; in the latter case it is only one of the tests of truth. All are willing to admit that true theories work sooner or later, but not all are willing to admit that any working theory today is true. The latter view makes truth changeable, makes it grow, makes the truths of today the falsehoods of tomorrow, which is the pragmatic view, while most people, admitting our views of truth may change, would hold that truth itself is eternal, changeless, subject to no identification, after any lapse of time whatsoever, with falsehood. Let the reader compare these utterances: "Truth is *made*, just as health, wealth, and strength are made, in the course of experience" (James); and, "All errors have only a time. After a hundred millions of subtleties, sophisms, and lies, the smallest truth remains precisely what it was, before", (Chinese). Our feelings may or may not prefer the former; Our reason inclines to the latter. A Dartmouth colleague remarked to me that pragmatism is the pudding-philosophy, because it says the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

It is evident we can never discover the truth about freedom on the pragmatic basis, for the simple reason that freedom is the theory that works well for the free willist, and is therefore true to him, and determinism is the theory that works well for the determinist, and is therefore true to him. It is evident that pragmatism is individualism in thought, that it is a return to

the “old ways of thinking” of the Greek Sophists of the fifth century B. C., that some objective standard of truth is needed, other than the feelings can supply, such as Socrates supplied in his doctrine of the concept. To discover truth you must turn from pragmatism and the emotions to rationality.

The only strange word in the following quotation is the word “strangely”: “But free will has also been discussed pragmatically, and, strangely enough, the same pragmatic interpretation has been put upon it by both disputants.” In view of the main principle of pragmatism, this result seems the most natural thing in the world. Both determinists and free willists want their respective views to guarantee “imputability” that is, both want doers held accountable for their deeds, they want their respective theories to lead to this consequence, to work well in this respect. Now to the determinist imputability is possible on a deterministic theory but not on a free-will theory; to the free willist, the same, *mutatis mutandis*. Is this “strange”? Not on a pragmatic basis. Contradictory intellectual views regularly give the same emotional satisfactions; for example theologies are many and conflicting, the religious satisfactions are, very much the same in all. If the satisfactions, the practical consequences, are to give the quality of truth to theories, we may expect to continue to find truth claimed by each of two contradictory views. Man has not discovered more truth because he has been willing to follow his feelings rather than his reason.

Truth is one and eternal, our views of it are many and changing. The pragmatist confuses the ideal truth with the human view of it, asserting of the former what is applicable only to the latter, in effect denying the existence of ideal truth, asserting there is nothing but changing truths. This glorifying of human views of truth is an elevation of human thinking, properly characterized as “Humanism” in philosophy, analogous to the literary Humanism of the Renaissance which also glorified the present life of man.

Dialectically the error of pragmatism has been often refuted from the critics of Heraclitus and the Sophists till our own day.

All truths change, says pragmatism; that assertion is true, pragmatism also says; then that assertion will change, implying some truths do not change, which is the contradictory of the fundamental assertion of pragmatism. Thus the pragmatic philosophy is self-contradictory. Just as Heraclitus said, "Everything is in a flux"; but this could not be true unless his assertion were not in a flux. Our fundamental proposition must be self-consistent in itself and in its implications; this is "the law of identity", the first law of thoughts. Professor James lightly esteems the human demand for "immutability", but finds the pragmatic sanction for freedom in its promise that the world is not fixed in its badness, that it can be bettered, that freedom is a melioristic doctrine, and that it allows novelties to arise in the world. "Free-will pragmatically means *novelties in the world*, the right to expect that in its deepest elements as well as in its surface phenomena, the future may not identically repeat and imitate the past." This is the kind of a world his "will to believe" demands; freedom gives him this kind of a world; therefore freedom is the true theory.

When we examine this pragmatic argument for freedom, it becomes evident that the question is not what kind of a world we want, but what kind of a world we have. The universe will not cash any blank check our feelings draw upon it. Have we a determined world or a world in which some freedom is present? And this is our original question, to be settled not by emotional and practical, but by rational, standards. When pragmatism defends either freedom or determinism, it provides poor argument for good doctrines.

In his newly translated work, Bergson, the leading French pragmatic philosopher, holds that freedom is real but indefinable. "Freedom is the relation of the concrete self to the act which it performs. This relation is indefinable, just because we *are* free" (page 219). The mistake of the determinist has, been to deny freedom, that of the libertarian to define freedom. Both mistakes are due to confusing time, which is really a qualitative duration with space, which is a quantitative extensity. This mistake began with Kant. The confusion was

natural as we want to understand the internal by the same quantitative measurements used in understanding the external. But the confusion leads either to the denial of freedom or to its definition, which, in effect, denies it, or, still again, to relegating freedom to the unknowable world as did Kant. Really the self in its deepest states is free, is spontaneous, subject to no law, since the same states are never repeated. To speak either of foreseeing acts or of acting otherwise are improper, due to confusing time as heterogeneous duration with space as homogeneous extensity.

This summary of Bergson's brilliant argument will doubtless prove somewhat unintelligible in itself apart from his extensive treatment. Perhaps one of his own paragraphs would help, as follows:

"To sum up: every demand for explanation in regard to freedom comes back, without our suspecting it, to the following question: 'Can time be adequately represented by space?' To which we answer: Yes, if you are dealing with time flown; No, if you speak of time flowing. Now, the free act takes place in time which is flowing and not in time which has already flown. Freedom is therefore a fact, and among the facts which we observe there is none clearer. All the difficulties of the problem, and the problem itself, arise from the desire to endow duration with the same attributes as extensity, to interpret a succession by a simultaneity, and to express the idea of freedom in a language in to which it is obviously untranslatable" (page 221).

This view of Bergson in distinguishing spatial and temporal conceptions and in applying the latter to the problem of freedom is somewhat similar to that of Munsterberg in his distinction between the described and real selves, and to that of Royce in his distinction between "description" and "appreciation". Bergson's view is also related to that which holds the subconscious self to be the real self. "Hence there are finally two different selves, one of which is, as were, the external projection of the other, its spatial and, so to speak, social representation; only the former is free" (page 231). Incidentally it appears between the lines that Bergson might

deny the possibility or desirability of a scientific psychology, which fits in exactly with Gibson's essay quoted above (page 101).

Three critical remarks may be made of these views of Bergson on freedom, viz., (1) They assure us of freedom without telling us what it is and without giving us reasons why we should accept it. It is a freedom that cannot be argued about. On this basis Bergson considers that the problem of free will disappears. Such conclusions impress us as being mystical, if not dogmatic; mystical, in that the truth of freedom is held to be indefinable; dogmatic in that something is asserted as true without reasons, concerning which therefore no argument avails.

(2) They demand a metaphysics to explain selves as spontaneous activities. Such a metaphysics Howison provides. Bergson's *Creative Evolution* may be considered as the metaphysics behind these views of freedom, but it finds nothing permanent, and so does not escape the dialectical refutation of the pragmatic error given above.

(3) Such freedom as Bergson permits himself to intimate appears to be unreliable in character. It is not a freedom that one can consciously possess and direct, not a freedom social in its character, but rather a freedom possessing us in the great depths of our being and doing we know not what next. In this respect Bergson's world is somewhat like the chance world of James. However, I should be unwilling for these criticisms to pass without adding my sense of indebtedness to the pragmatic writings for what Schiller calls their "invigorating effect."

Perhaps the least objectionable and best reasoned views on freedom presented by any of the pragmatists are those of F. C. S. Schiller. His contribution to the discussion is the rebuttal of the deterministic objection that freedom would destroy scientific predictability and introduce the reign of chaos. This he does by showing that "*whichever of the alternatives is chosen, it will appear to be rationally connected with the antecedent circumstances*". On this basis scientific calculations



should remain as exact as they are today, and still there would be freedom in the universe. What one freely chooses is not disconnected with its antecedents through the fact of its being a product of freedom. Another thinker, Petrunkevich, materialistically inclined, proposes a mechanical basis for free will in a somewhat similar way. He argues that every cause has an effect but that the effect may be one of several possible effects, the "principle of plural effects". On such a basis, to return to Schiller, the scientific demand for determinism and, the ethical demand for freedom may be reconciled. He concludes:

"To sum up: our Freedom is really such as it appears; it consists in the determinable indetermination of a nature which is plastic, incomplete, and still evolving. These features pervade the universe; but they do not make it unintelligible. Nay, they are the basis of its perfectibility."

In the volume of *Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James*, there is one by Professor Thorndike on "A Pragmatic Substitute for Free Will". The purpose of the "substitute" is to provide a basis, for that melioristic view of the world which Professor James found in free will. The substitute itself is the assertion that the behavior of man betters himself and his offspring and cannot do otherwise. A physiological mechanism is hypothecated to explain how the process may take place. "Indeed, the one thing that can justify that faith [that we make the world better] is precisely brain-physiology as revealed by animal behavior." "We are not free occasionally to swerve the future to our wants; we are forced always to do so." "Human reason in selecting both ideas and acts is part and parcel of the same order of nature in which the magnet selects the iron and the earth its elliptical path." "To assert that, so far as a man's behavior goes, he betters himself, is the same variety of judgment as to say that, so far as the behavior of the population of Russia goes, it increases itself."

These selected quotations from Professor Thorndike's essay suggest its point of view but, apart from their contexts, not its persuasiveness. I venture a few criticisms, (1) Readers of the

whole essay will probably agree with me that a better descriptive title would have been: "A Substitute for Pragmatic Free Will." It is not "a pragmatic substitute" because it is a naturalistic determinism, not a spiritual causation, such as the pragmatists demand.

(2) Further, it is not "pragmatic" because it does not work as well; rather, it works too well—it gives us not the meliorism, which Professor James wants, but the inevitable optimism which he does not want. It secures the same kind of optimism as does the Absolutism which Professor James rejects, only on the materialistic, rather than on the spiritualistic, foundation. Thorndike says, "What free will offers is the right to believe that human behavior may, as far as it itself goes, possibly change the world for the better. What our substitute for the freedom of the will offers is the surety that it does". Professor James says, "Meliorism treats salvation as neither necessary nor impossible". It is evident, in sum, that Professor Thorndike proposes to substitute a necessity for a possibility. There is no doubt that the world can grow better if indeed it is necessitated so to grow, but this is no substitute for "creative evolution", "humanism", and "the making of reality" for which pragmatism stands.

(3) Further, "to assert that, so far as a man's behavior goes, he betters himself", is not obviously true, nor susceptible of easy proof, in view of the men and women who fill our hospitals, jails, and asylums.

(4) Still further, to make such an assertion removes the distinction between good and bad conduct, since the behavior of the man who succumbs to temptation must be supposed to better him. The substitute, like Nietzsche, takes us "beyond good and evil", a distinction made by pragmatism in common with the moral sense of the world. In fact, Professor Thorndike seems to face this conclusion in his parenthetical remark: "We must not forget that there are satisfied drunkards, paupers, and invalids." And "satisfaction", he has previously argued, is what the nervous mechanism prefers.

What pragmatism stands for is a world which man can make

better by his freedom rightly used, not a world sure to become better whatever man's "animal behavior". We conclude then that pragmatism, as Schiller was quoted above as saying, "must establish the reality of freedom", and that mechanical determinism, even though it could optimistically guarantee the world's salvation, is no substitute, "just as good", for meliorism. In his last word Professor James wrote: " 'Free will' means, nothing but real novelty; so pluralism accepts the notion of free will.

"Pluralism is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but melioristic rather. The world, it thinks, may be saved on condition that its parts shall do their best. But shipwreck in detail, or even on the whole, is among the open possibilities."

While pragmatism is useless in finding and defining the truth, it is priceless in demanding the application of truth to life. Both the origin and the goal of truth are indeed life. Out of experience our theories of truth arise, back into experience they go. Our theories of truth are functions of life; our theories are true, not because they work well, but because they fit the facts and correspond to the nature of things. The Ptolemaic theory worked well for centuries, even allowing the prediction of eclipses, but Copernicus showed it to be false. In contrast with the truth itself, our views of truth do indeed enlarge with experience. As F. C. S. Schiller finely says: "Genuine thinking must issue from and guide action, must remain immanent in the life in which it moves and has its being."

But after we have found our theories, they do indeed make a difference. And the difference they make inspires and justifies our search. Why spend these pages in discussing an abstruse scientific and metaphysical question like determinism? Just because it does make such a difference in our practical attitude toward ourselves, our fellows, and our world, as well as satisfy to a degree our human need to envisage the truth.

## **CHAPTER 8: THE DIFFERENCE IT MAKES**

AFTER all, what difference does it make whether we are determinists or free willists? This is the question of the common sense man, and also of philosophers when they would be pragmatic and practical.

Now determinism does lead to placing exclusive emphasis upon heredity and environment in the explanation of men, and we must agree, that great, if not exclusive, emphasis belongs there; what freedom we have is certainly within limits. This means, for instance, that education is really the process of determining pupils through environment to be what they ought to be. Educational theory on this basis must regard children as determinable, as indeed they are to a very great degree.

The great educational philosopher, Herbart, made practical pedagogy a test of philosophical theories; by so doing he was led to reject the philosophy of Fichte which made the self too free and independent of the influences of environment. Herbart writes:

“He who earnestly desires to achieve the highest degree of self-control should, above everything, guard against the delusion of false theories which represent his freedom greater than it really is. These theories are not capable of making one free, they rather plunge one into all the dangers of false security. On the other hand, let everyone acknowledge his weak side and strive to strengthen it. This is not accomplished by direct watchfulness alone, but the whole interaction of the man’s environment in actual life is involved. As the will originally had its origin in the circle of thought, so through the choice of employments and expedients, it leads back to the further culture and development of the same.”

Again, determinism would affect our views of punishment in home, school, and state. Punishment would be not so much retributive as preventive in nature and purpose; it would look not toward the past and the return of the deed on the doer but toward the future and the determining of the child or criminal away from the repetition of the misdeed. In our courts of justice the tendency is in fact in the direction of blaming

heredity, environment, associations, training, and the like, rather than the man himself, for his misconduct. The person punished may regard his punishment as a just retribution, if he will; "we receive the due reward of our deeds". But the person who punishes should regard himself as an instrument not of vengeance but of reformation. As Plato has it:

"If you will think, Socrates, of the nature of punishment, you will see at once that in the opinion of mankind virtue may be acquired; no one punishes the evil-doer under the notion, or for the reason, that he has done wrong— only the unreasonable fury of a beast acts in that manner. But he who desires to inflict rational punishment does not retaliate for a past wrong which cannot be undone; he has regard to the future, and is desirous that the man who is punished, and he who sees him punished, may be deterred from doing wrong again. He punishes for the sake of prevention, thereby clearly implying that virtue is capable of being taught. This is the notion of all who retaliate upon others either privately or publicly."

In the realm of the emotions the doctrine of determinism disengages pity, rather than censure for miscreants, and congratulation rather than praise for the worthy. Parents, teachers, and judges who accept the deterministic view of life would consistently regard refractory children and members of society as victims of circumstances over which they had no control, rather than as obstinately and willfully disobedient; they would temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Likewise they would regard the obedient and law-abiding as the children of good fortune. All people alike, whether good, bad, or indifferent, would be regarded as receiving the portion which their lot in life had assigned them. As a matter of fact this consistent application of the deterministic philosophy does find place in the Orient; in the West it is not general.

In the region of government, in home, school, and state, determinism relies upon law, and its rewards and penalties. The ruling authority is absolute, the system is everything, individuality is nothing. The race is to be improved not by changing purposes but by bettering conditions. In short,

determinism relies upon all external forces, but not the internal force of the free choice of a moral agent. It should be remarked at this point that the relative free willist, the believer in freedom within limits, can also accept many of these conclusions, and in practice often does so.

Two inconsequent conclusions, however, are sometimes drawn from the doctrine of determinism; one is, "since all is fated, let us be at ease in Zion"; the other is, "since all is fated, we are not accountable". These are inconsequent conclusions because, if you are predestined to be strenuous, you cannot be at ease; and if you are predestined to be at ease, you cannot be strenuous. As a matter of fact many determinists are most vigorous actors, for example, the Mohammedan fighters. As for the other, the self-excusing, tendency, we have seen that on the deterministic basis the deed is still the doer's, for which he is responsible, in the sense that he did it, not in the sense that he could have done otherwise.

On the other hand the libertarians emphasize will, especially in the young period of habit-formation. "You can, if you will"; "Try, try, again"; "Where there's a will there's a way", etc. are their mottoes. Education is also a process of developing self-control, of securing, individual independence, of outgrowing the domination of circumstance, of learning to determine one's self in accord with truth and right, whose means may be deterministic but whose end is freedom. Individual responsibility is emphasized, such that one is to be blamed, not simply pitied, for doing wrong, and censured as a free person. Punishment is in part retributive, the past deed recoiling upon the doer. The gentler restraints of love supplant the sterner ones of law. Each one may avail himself, if he will, of the highest good afforded by home or school or state. It requires effort to win the best things in life, and effort may or may not be put forth as one wills. It is fitting to reproach oneself for doing wrong, to be repentant in humility before one's outraged higher self, to make resolutions to live better, and to keep them. The belief in man's freedom has inspired, effort in the West in contrast with the paralysis of activity caused by belief

in determinism in the East. The one leads to optimism, the other to pessimism. The one emphasizes the salvation that comes by character, the other the salvation which is the unmerited gift of Divine Grace. The one makes man a son, the other the creation, of God.

F. C. S. Schiller points out that, despite our deterministic and libertarian theories, the determinist acts in daily life as though the future were incalculable and undetermined and the libertarian as though the future were to a degree calculable and determined. He continues: "In other words, the pragmatic difference between the rival theories tends to be evanescent; in practice both parties have to pocket their metaphysics and to act sensibly; in theory the differences are such that their influence on practice is very remote, and mainly emotional. For common sense, again, these are no practical alternatives; the whole metaphysical controversy, therefore, seems nugatory, and is regarded with the utmost equanimity. And is not this all as it should be in a universe in which thought is secondary to action?"

In objecting to this general denial of practical differences between determinism and libertarianism on the part of Schiller, it may be admitted at the outset that a man's action does not invariably betray his theories, but this is because other things than his theories mold his action, not because his theories make no practical difference. And that in this case the rival theories do make a difference is indicated by the careful study of the contrast between Eastern and Western civilizations, by the number of differences already cited above, and, to use a specific illustration, by the very great difference it made in the world-view of another pragmatist, William James, that he championed libertarianism. It would be hard for pragmatism to find a philosophical theory that has made or does make so much practical difference as this one. Schiller was on better ground when, in the same essay, he wrote:

. . . "Even differences of choices which at first seem infinitesimal may lead to growing divergencies, and ultimately constitute all the difference between a world in which we are

saved and one in which we are damned."

In a recent work on ethics I find the following: "A man's power is due (1) to physical heredity; (2) to social heredity, including care, education, and the stock of inventions, information, and institutions which enable him to be more efficient than the savage; and finally (3) to his own efforts. Individualism may properly claim this third factor. It is just to treat men unequally so far as their efforts are unequal." This is a compact summary of the whole question. Heredity, environment, and will or effort explain man; the first two forces help to determine man; the third force, in which lies his freedom, helps him to determine himself. The libertarian will go two-thirds of the way with the determinist, but not all the way. He wants to treat men unequally who make unequal efforts, and he wants not simply to be made but to help make himself. Though "the gate" be environment and "the scroll" be heredity, the libertarian affirms with Henley,

**"It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul."**

At this point we may briefly state our conclusions regarding "free will and human responsibility". As to freedom, we conclude that man is indeed mostly determined but partly free. In the right use of such limited freedom as he possesses man wins his peculiar glory. As to human responsibility, we have found that either of the two theories of determinism and freedom holds a man responsible for his deed, though in a different way. To the determinist, man is responsible because the deed is the effect of his character; to the free willist, man is responsible because the deed is the effect of his choice. The sense of responsibility is felt by both determinists and free willists, but, again in a different way. The determinist, if his feeling fits his theory, which it may not do, feels himself the appointed agent of destiny; the free willist feels himself to some degree at least a volunteer in the ranks of whatsoever



cause he is serving. The common sense of responsibility looked to us in the direction of freedom rather than determinism.

Individual readers of this philosophical argument will probably find that they belong to some one of the three following classes: first, those who think it is a drawn issue between determinism and free will because of the equality of the arguments and the perplexities of the question; second, those who accept determinism; third, those who accept libertarianism. The first class has a spokesman in Whittier:

**"It is not ours to separate  
The tangled skein of will and fate;  
To show what metes and bounds should stand  
Upon the soul's debatable land,  
And between Choice and Providence  
Divide the circle of events."**

The second class may return to the fatalism of Omar as clothed in the beauty of Fitzgerald:

**"The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."**

The third class will say with Tennyson:

**". . . and find  
Nearer and ever nearer Him who wrought  
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
By this main-miracle, that thou art thou,  
With power on thine own act and on the world."**

But whatever our personal philosophy of life on this theoretical question, we can all as practical people probably admit that it is important for man that he be up and doing. To ask a pragmatic question, Which theoretical solution stimulates our action most? In answer, I like to remember that Huxley, the great agnostic but vigorous anti-materialist, in his famous essay on "The Physical Basis of Life", composed prior to his formulation of the theory that man is a conscious automaton, wrote those remarkable words that liberate human effort:

"We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. To do this effectually it is necessary to be fully possessed of only two beliefs: the first, that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited; the second, that our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events."

Our argument would show there is the best philosophical ground for holding that "our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events." It has assigned to man a limited power of origination, a spontaneity not absolute indeed, since man is not God, but relative, since man is God's son expressing the nature of his Divine Original. "The course of events" is mostly determined by the will of God but partly also by the will of man. It is therefore not "destiny that hath to instrument this lower world and what is in it" but man making complete or marring the plan of God for the organization of life.

## APPENDIX: FREEDOM AND ONTOLOGY

IN the foregoing argument the problem of freedom has been discussed without specific reference to the problem of being. We have not sought to solve the problem *a priori* by bringing a system of metaphysics to bear on it, nor have we sought to find out the nature of being from the angle of freedom. To some it may appear as an omission that this last thing was not attempted. I subjoin a few general observations that may help relate our problem of freedom with that of being.

The ontology of materialism, with its atoms and the void, is necessarily deterministic, as no spiritual principle is recognized.

The ontology of agnostic monism, with its pantheistic cosmology, is also deterministic, the principle of existence being neither personal nor self-directive.

The ontology of dualism, with its two realities of mind and matter, or God and the world, is sometimes deterministic (Mohammedanism), and sometimes libertarian (Zoroastrianism).

The ontology of idealism, from whose standpoint the preceding argument is written, with its emphasis upon the exclusive reality of spirit, has two forms, *viz.*, absolute idealism and pluralistic idealism. Absolute idealism, though using the term "freedom", is customarily deterministic (T. H. Green), though in some instances libertarian (Royce). Pluralistic idealism is regularly libertarian (James).

Of the conflicting ontologies modern knowledge has practically set aside the materialistic hypothesis. Dualism, which is half materialistic, is in almost as neglected a plight.

So the modern determinist who is looking for a satisfactory ontology is likely to find it in pantheism, while the modern libertarian is likely to adopt one of the two forms of idealism.

The most interesting ontological fight today is that between the absolute and the pluralistic (pragmatic) idealists, though the situation is complicated by the epistemological considerations of "the new realism". Some of the absolute, and practically all of personal, idealists advocate freedom, while the

new realism, through its kinship to materialism, usually favors determinism. Shall I leave you to be determined by, or to choose between, the rival theories?

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